
BATTLERIDGE:

AN

HISTORICAL TALE.

VOL. II.



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AN

HISTORICAL TALE,

FOUNDED ON FACTS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY A LADY OF QUALITY.

VOL. II.

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BATFELERIDGE

HISTORICAL TALE

FOUND OF FACTS



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BATTLERIDGE.

CHAP. I.

DURING the latter part of Sir Ralph Vesey's residence in Scotland, Doctor Scot's letters increased, private messengers arrived, and frequent absences ensued; but all was secret. Sir Ralph and Mr. Scot were inclined to be offended with the Doctor's taciturnity, for not even to them would he disclose a hint of his present engagements.

Lord Staffa renewed the waining hos-

pitality of his house, paying all possible attention, to avoid giving offence to the Reformers; by which means his family remained unmolested. The old Thane of Lanark was ever a most welcome guest at Cross-bow Castle; he was now the representative of the late brave Lord Carnwarth, whose impetuous zeal in the cause of the late King proved the unfortunate cause of losing the battle of Naseby. This laird was a genuine Caledonian Chief; infinitely attached to his country, tho' often expressing his shame at their faithless duplicity respecting King Charles I. He possessed a kind of rough politeness, was intelligent, and very conversable. These qualities rendered him a favourite with the ladies.

Doctor Scot coming in one morning

when the Chief was relating to them an Highland legendary tale, cried, 'Ah, ladies, if you could prevail on the Laird to relate the cause of his family's high elevation in the ninth century, you would be wonderfully amused: how did our late most amiable Sovereign delight to hear the relation from good Lord Carnwarth, the lineal descendant of its hero, the great Dalzell!' The ladies became very importunate for the story.

The Thane, blowing off a great quantity of Scotch snuff, (which he was little used to do) and wiping his face, replied to the Doctor: 'I dinna ken how it is, my gude man, but I ne'er can relate that story without finding my auld ene filled wi' warm water: but I will promise ye, honoured ladies,

to send the history cyphered out fairly by one of your parsons, whom I have fostered sin my precious countrymen turned him out of his glebe-house, for his loyalty to the gude King. The man is a mighty clerk, and has added to it what he calls a preface, which he wills all to read, in order the better to understand the book. What times were those ! e'en worse, by Saint Columba, than the present evil days ! I will speed ye the manuscript by Pat, my Highlander, who, though turned of three score, heeds not running thirty or forty miles before breakfast.'

The ladies most gratefully accepted the offer, and were very impatient for Pat's arrival.

' Pat is come, and has brought it,' said the beautiful Miss Scot one morn-

ing, as she entered the breakfast-room, her eyes sparkling with pleasure.

‘Get your work then, my girls, and I will hold forth to the ladies,’ said Mrs. Scot.

‘Pray do,’ replied Lady Vesey, ‘for you read delightfully.’

‘No,’ said Lord Staffa, laying violent hands on the parcel, ‘not a word of it till evening: I am engaged to meet Macdonald on business, and the Doctor, I know, is writing one of his secret letters. Would we knew its contents! In which wish he was heartily joined by Sir Ralph and Mrs. Scot.

The appointed hour arrived, Lord Staffa relinquished the parcel, which being carefully developed, was thus

superscribed, according to the mode of those days :

‘ These, to my honoured ladies, the Lady Vesey and Lady Staffa, and also to the worthy gentlewoman, Madam Scot, and the fair young mistresses, her daughters—humbly present

I DARE;

AN ANCIENT TRUE SCOTTISH HISTORY, THUS COMPILED
BY NATHAN HAY, CLERK, WHO PRAYS THEE,
READER, FIRST TO READ HIS

PREFACE.

‘ THOSE versed in ancient Scottish history will soon discover that one of the chief personages herein depicted appears a considerable character in the reign of Kenneth II. That great and

good prince is esteemed the second founder of Scotland's national glory for he finally extirpated the Picts from Caledonia, introducing therein laws, subordination, magnificence, and civilization.

This Prince banished from among his rude subjects the undistinguishing and confusing custom of using only patronymic names, or names deduced from personal defects or beauties. He distributed among his bravest followers their late Pictish conquests, and fixed them amid those evacuated lands, under the titles of Lairds or Thanes. Scotland, therefore, under these feudal laws, soon abated its native ferocity, and equalled its neighbours in arts, magnificence, and cultivation; altho' in succeeding ages, torn by intestine

wars, it became less refined than most European states.

‘Cotemporary with Kenneth, Ethelwolph alone swayed the sceptre of England; deducing that supremacy from the recent and brilliant conquests of his great father, Egbert, whose valour had reduced the heptarchy into a monarchical government.

‘Ethelwolph having been destined for the Church, united monkish opinions with hereditary ferocity and bravery; hence he was alternately governed either by the enthusiastic Metropolitan of Wessex, Bishop Swithin, or by the sanguinary Bishop Aldred, conjunctively with his favourite, Earl Ceorls, a libertine lawless General, who most frequently (even when returning from confession) attracted the

King into his vortex of gross debauchery.

That melange of people who did not follow the scanty remains of ancient Britons in their second emigration either into Wales or Cornwall, upon the Romans abandoning England, were at this period subsided into a quiet contented race; loyally attached to their Saxon Kings, as deducing benefits from those relevant laws first enacted by Egbert, and afterwards compleated by the great Alfred. Nor did the frequent irruption of the piratical bloody Danes, (which commenced about this time) lessen the general loyalty of the people; for fear is of an adhesive nature, and loyalty is often engendered by the love of property, rather than from the honest dictates of good principles.

These Danish descendants from those swarms of Scythian Tartars who, under various names, had overrun Europe from the fifth century, had, by their fell, cruel, and superstitious rites, greatly impeded Christianity: they were, in truth, Kings of terror, and continually practising in those kinds of ingenious torture which could only be equalled by early Persic monarchs, and recently by our neighbours of Holland, in Amboyna.

Such was the state of this happy island at the commencement of this history. England and Scotland being now bound in amity, (a rare event!) from mutual dread of the Danes, the scenes in this history are often exhibited in each kingdom. The tenth age, called the leaden century, from its gross ignorance, drew near: continual

feuds were obliterating refinement, defying laws, and parenting discord.

‘Conscience, that candle of the mind, is not easily subdued in the most obdurate; hence, by the arts of the monks, who filled these ignorant insurgents with spiritual terrors, arose the mighty and unjust power of ecclesiastics; they, carefully concealing the scantlings of knowledge, for some learning the Romans had established in England, circulated only from their scriptoriums, egregious legends, false histories, dreadful anathemas, all calculated to increase their dominion over ignorant minds, and terrify the terrors of mankind into submission to ecclesiastic oppression. It therefore follows that a more contemptible and sterile time could not

be offered as historic entertainment to the readers of an enlightened period; who will, doubtless, think the accounts of murder, treachery, and superstition overcharged; but they are melancholy facts. Yet, even in this time of depravity, great minds appear in great actions; the good, the great, the brave, the ferocious, the abandoned, are equally discernible through the hairy habiliments of the savage, as from beneath the more delicate texture of modern draperies.

‘ The corrector of the manuscript, endeavouring to represent the manners of the age, has yet taken the liberty of filing off some disagreeable excrescences in the rude expressions and almost obsolete language of the time. Painters of the modern schools study

the rough and masculine manner of the early practitioners in that art; but when Raphael copies his master, the muscular Albert Durem, do we blame him for softening his Magdalens and polishing his Madonas ?

I DARE:

A TALE.

— ‘EVERY tremendous symptom foretells a storm—what intense gleams of heat! In Arabia never felt I a more fervid, oppressive atmosphere. Tormented with stinging insects, my Barb, Selim, pulls forward so vehemently that I can with difficulty repress his eagerness. Here, Archibald, old and faithful friend, I prithee bear this massive shield, my clymore broadino.’ *

So said a young and portly figured Hereman † to his only and aged atten-

* The massive and heavy swords used in battle.

† The name of warriors at that time.

dant, as they were slowly mounting the Chiviot Hills from Scotland, in one of those sultry evenings which frequently mark and close our Dog days.

‘ Ah! (said Archibald) you never would have abandoned your sword and shield, had your strength been not impaired! Ah! that fatal, and, I fear, superficially healed, wound! Why sent you on your train? Why trust so precious a life to the care and guidance only of a poor old man? What will the Royal Kenneth say to such a procedure in the person whom, above all others, he delighteth deservedly to honour?’

‘ I will tell thee, friend (replied the warrior), religion is of a retired nature, an enemy to pomp and shew; thou knowest the votive gifts I vowed personally to offer on the shrine of the blessed St. Mary, at Eboracum, to

whose holy intercession, doubtless, I owe my convalescent state. As my vow was sincere, I wish to pay it in all simplicity of heart. What apparent ostentation would have been displayed, had the splendid suite attending on my embassy to the English Court followed me to Eboracum! I would not disgrace my Scottish Sovereign, by seemingly thus forgetting his Ambassador's delegated dignity; therefore, Archibald, I command thee not to divulge my name and station to any person without my permission. At what distance, thinkest thou, is that castle where thou promisest courteous reception will await us? I am weary—it is a pelting storm; the forked lightning dismays Selim—what a wild country! Evening will soon close.'

'We are, Sir, near Chiviot's sum-

mit; shall not pass its Down many furlongs ere we fall on Chiviot Fort; that was the castle's name, when, about forty years past, I followed in the train of your uncle Donald, Lord of the Isles, and there partook of great welcome from Earl Sigfrith, who was then Lord Warden of the marches—alas, he is gone! and gone also, I learn, is his nephew and heir, Renne, Lord of Montmorin in Normandy; but the old palmer, whom we met yesterday, assures me the Halfladens,* his widow and daughter, courteously delight in receiving and nurturing travellers. Thane! my dearest master! what affects you thus? you bow down even to your saddle's trappings?' 'By a sudden and

* A Saxon word for distributors of bread, a custom constantly used by the great people of those days, from whence comes our appellation of *Lady*.

violent jerking down of Selim's head,
I fear me my late wound bleeds afresh;
I pray thee alight, and lead my horse—
I am faint.'

'Merciful Heaven! (said Archibald)
holy Saints Andrew and Columba, be-
friend me! I see, I see his blood forcing
its way through the cuirass joints!'

'Be calm, Archibald, repose thy
trust in Heaven. I could have wished
a more honourable death than by a
wound in my back! say that it origi-
nated not from flight, but was pointed
by vile and secret malice. My father!
my king! my country! how have I
loved and honoured each! Thanks to
Heaven I leave no weeping babes, no
lovely dame, to heighten by their tears
Death's ordeal!'

'A ray of hope! (says Archibald)

I see, see some villein* children driving sheep into that cave. Hollo! Hollo!

A beautiful peasant girl, about fifteen (clad in an endive blue kirtle, her linen white as snow, her straw-hat fallen almost behind her abundantly flowing ringlets) peeped out from the cave. Retiring instantly in apparent terror, a curly pated cherubic boy (such as Rubens often exhibits) came forward, and falling on his kness, cried—‘Pray ye, don’t hurt sister! Fader is almost dead, and if you kill Ellen, he will die too.’

‘My boy, (resumed Archibald) we will not hurt either: here is a poor Thane bleeding to death.’

‘Bleeding to death! said a soft and mellifluous voice: (it was Ellen’s) I am not afraid—(advancing, she continued)

* *Villein* signifies the inhabitants of Saxon villages, and answered to our peasantry.

Good old man, let us lift him down, lay him upon that fern-bed we children rest on when wearied with tending sheep on Chiviot.'

She assisted with great adroitness, and more strength than could be expected from the delicate texture of her form. Insensible to every other object, the warrior lifting up his heavy eye lids, muttered, 'Angel!' weakly trying to throw his weight on poor old Archibald.

'I pray thee, (said Archibald, having placed his master on the fern bed) hold his hands, while I examine the wound in his shoulder?' The blood instantly spouted forth. 'Hold his hands on, (cried Ellen) while I fetch some stuff we had of our Leech * Os-

* *Leech* was at this period the appellation for a surgeon or physician. Both arts were then at a low ebb.

wald, which stopt a sheep from bleeding to death. She instantly returned with a phial and feather, and having torn her apron into lint, with great skill and gentleness applied the styptic. The blood directly stanch'd, but its sudden reflux occasioned fainting.— Again she retired, and catching water in a little bowl, forced some into the warrior's mouth, plentifully sprinkling his face. Signs of revival appeared.

‘Where am I?’ said the sufferer. ‘Where is my angel? Death is nothing.’ Sleep overcame him. ‘You are wonderfully ready,’ said Archibald.

‘I have been used to help Oswald to tend our villeins, and too much used to sickness in poor dear mammy: she is lately dead, and I think me fader will soon follow. We live hard by, down

Chiviot. Fader is Forester to the Half-laden of Warwick, who dwells at the Fort ; and we are all going away when she and fader are able; but I hope not till this poor Thane is got well.' Then recollecting her little brother, she cried 'Hugo, where art ?' The boy was busied in patting the horses, and feeding them with the sheep's hay; for he had led them within the cave, to avoid the storm, now greatly subsided.

'Art not afraid of such a great horse, my boy ?' said Archibald. 'No, (replied Hugo) I like him the better: I like snorting horses, and drums, and trumpets, and arrows.'

A loud hollowing stopt the conversation. 'There's fader got as far as the holly-tree, to see for us,' cried Hugo.

'My child ! and safe from the light-

ning,' said the peasant, with elevated eyes. 'Where is Ellen? Is she spared?'

'Yes, fader,' replied the boy, 'she is with a fine young hereman by the fern bed.' The peasant's pale face flushed instantaneously: grasping a stout stick, he advanced: 'Perhaps,' said he, 'some lawless Dane from amid those prowling bands!'

'No,' replied Archibald, 'a brave Scotch Thane, wounded thro' treachery, and saved from bleeding to death by this lassie's humanity.'

Upon viewing the stranger, unmindful even of Ellen, who kneeling supported his head, the peasant stopped, half proceeding, half retiring, his hands expanding, while manly tears ran down his cheek. The man had a noble air and person, erect and stately; his countenance, though deeply traisted and

much bronzed by the sun, bespoke him not fifty; yet his head was bald, and the few remnant curls on its pole were white as silver. Such a striking figure would Salvator have wished to introduce walking over our rugged stones, and facing the bellowing storm.

‘All is over, I perceive,’ said the peasant. ‘No, no,’ retorted Ellen, rather peevishly, ‘he has slept, and now awakes. Ah, that we had something to comfort him!’

‘Here, child,’ said the father, producing a bottle, ‘here is some hypocrist, left by thy dear mother. I be-thought me my children might be wet, and terrified with the lightning (it has fired two of our villagers’ cots), and therefore luckily brought these scanty remains of friend’s bounty with me.’

The Thane, refreshed and revived

by the viand, expressed his gratitude more by looks than speech.

‘ Venerable man,’ said the peasant to Archibald, ‘ not a moment should be lost: suffer me to bring assistants from our village, and remove the Thane to my small cot, till he can procure better accommodations; they will be offered from our Halfladen, and she retains a skilful leech in her fort. Ellen, come with me, and prepare to render our little dwelling as commodious as may be for our honoured guests: I will lead the horses to a stable, and you, Hugo, shall remain attendant here on the strangers.’

‘ Ceorl,’*replied the much recovered Thane, ‘ your kindness shall be gratefully repaid. Why not leave this

* Ceorl signified the higher kind of peasants.

fair creature to continue her humane attention to me? I am not fastidious, any kind of accommodation suits a warrior, enured to hardships.'

'No, Thane,' said Ellen, 'I must go with fader. Dame Enna, our Vavasor's * sister, will lend me a hand to get things ready for you.'

Hugo was very reluctantly separated from the horses; but taking his sister's place in supporting the Thane's head, grew soon very communicative, to the great satisfaction of the immoderately curious old Archibald.

'And who,' said the veteran, 'is this Halfladen of Warwick that Ellen talked of?'

'Why,' replied the boy, 'she is the

* Vavasors were often first tenants, and a kind of stewards to Lords, ever esteemed what in these days we should term gentlemen.

Ethling *Agitha's mother; oh! she is the best of dames: she loves us: she is very lame, and keeps in her chamber. The Ethling has always been to her a naughty child. She is the ugliest woman you ever saw; she goes hopping along, and has a bunch upon her back as big as our smallest wooden bowl. Nobody loves her: she puts people in the dungeon, and in the haunted Batstower: she is afraid of nobody but the Vavator: she is gone away after the stranger: all the better, the Vavator says: but he will not marry her; he loves our Ellen; but don't you tell her or fader what I tell you.'

'And does Ellen love him? Who is he?' said the Thane.

* Athlings were the titles of elder sons among the Saxons. The heir of the crown was called the Athling. Ethling appertained to heiresses.

‘ No, Ellen hates him ; she hates sweethearts ; fader talks so much against them : so I never play with wenches, for fear they should be sweethearts ; Gammer says it is best not.’

‘ Who, I say, is the stranger ?’

‘ The Ethling won’t tell who he is. He came alone, one night, to the Fort, and raised the watchman ; the Ethling had him in the hall, and made much of him ; said she should marry him : but he met Ellen one day going up to the Halfladen’s chamber, (we often go to see her) and he liked her best ; so he and Agitha the Ethling quarrelled ; the stranger went away in the night, nobody knows where, and the Ethling now hates Ellen, fader, and me, and has quarrelled with Gammer.’

‘ Who is Gammer ?’

‘ Why she is poor mammy’s mammy ; she nursed the Ethling, and has lived a

great deal at the Fort, though she has a cot, and the Ethling has always loved her, though she often beats her. Fader says it is because Gammer nursed Dame Agitha, that the Halfladen and her husband, Earl Renne, when he was alive, were always so good to poor dear mammy and to fader, for her sake.'

The torrent of this puerile chatter was soon impeded by the arrival of Oswald, the Leech.

'I come,' said he, 'from the illustrious Editha, Halfladen of Warwick, to offer you, Hereman, from her all due courtesy, and she guarantees the same for her daughter, Agitha, Ethling, and now Halfladen of Chiviot, though not there, within the Fort of Chiviot. She unwillingly suffers your removal for one night only to Ralph, her Forester's cot, the apartment within

the hall (best befitting the Thane's present state) requiring airing; nor can she recommend the Vavasor's house for your reception, as Earl Walthelolf, Lord of the Marches,* with his train, lodge there to-night, from attending the Shire-gamot, now sitting at the neighbouring hundredary town. The Halfladen commands my ready attendance upon you till a more skilful Leech arrives. Her litter and attendant guards from Warwick will await your removal directly.'

* England at this time, and long afterwards, was separated both from Wales and Scotland by large tracts, termed the *Marches*, or borders. They were frequently scenes of blood and devastation, from the contentions of the two adjoining nations. An officer from England, at certain seasons (stiled the Warden) attended, to settle disputes, and often the Shire-gamot, or meeting of the representatives of the county, then assembled to administer justice.

All possible and due acknowledgements being paid, 'I pray thee, Leech, said curious Archibald, 'who may this courteous dame be?'

'She is widow of our late good and great Earl Renne, Lord of Chiviot, and of Mountmorin and Beau de Champ, from whence he took that name, in Normandy; who a few years past was murdered near that place by a vile banditti. Since that fatal time, Dame Editha has succeeded to the honours of Warwick, as sole heiress to her late brother, Earl Leofric. We, her attendants, for weighty reasons, much wish her removal to Warwick: she is lame, and at times so ill, that her quitting this country, where her loss will be truly deplored, remains unfixed. The litter has long been provided, as

being best suited to an infirm traveller.'

At that moment it arrived, displaying great magnificence, exhibiting the various arms appertaining to the Half-laden, and attended by a brave and active band, clad in the surtouts of Warwick. The wounded Thane being thus commodiously and safely removed to Ralph's cot, at the door was received by sweet Ellen, with a world of solicitude and woe imprinted on her lovely countenance. All within the little abode was perfectly neat; and the Thane soon, and thankfully, found himself placed on a comfortable pallet bed, within the entrance-room.

'Thanks be to Heaven!' said Oswald, 'the wound bleeds not. All I wish for to-night, Thane, is your sleeping: I shall give you a distillation of poppies,

and watch by you; further I shall not proceed till you are removed to the Fort, and a very experienced healer, who is sent for, is present.'

The nourishment prepared, the Thane would receive only from Ellen's hand, imbibing thereby more of love than of refreshment in the intoxicating draught. However her tenderness might wish to keep watch with Oswald, intuitive propriety and native modesty led her to retire early with little Hugo to a neighbouring cot. There was no prevailing on Archibald to repose his worn, wearied frame; and seeing his beloved master thus properly attended, thankfully prepared to pass the night in the outer-room with Ralph. Each were full of apprehensions on the impending operation which the Leech feared would be requisite, to extract

from the Thane's shoulder a part of the assassin's dagger.

‘Heaven,’ said Archibald, ‘who has so mercifully succoured him, will not withdraw its fostering protection.’

‘Be it so,!’ said Ralph, ‘I never beheld a finer man.’

‘I would I might tell thee,’ replied Archibald, ‘who he is; but——

‘Forbear,’ said the Forester, ‘not a word further: courtesy forbids prying impertinence.’

‘Yes,’ resumed Archibald, ‘but I may just tell thee he is the first man in Kenneth's court. A vile Thane, envying his greatness, stabbed him as he slept, and was discovered by a gauntlet and part of the dirk left behind him, in his haste to escape. The varlet did escape. A rich reward is offered for his apprehension, and he is

out-lawed. His servants report that he fled to his socios, the Danes, in East Anglia, and there fell in battle. Thou wilt be greatly rewarded for thy kindness to our warrior: the Scottish King loves him as his life.'

'I would have done the same by the meanest villein or slave,' * was the reply.

'Not a word more, I pray thee.'

'Thou art a wonderful man, Ralph! the Thane is certain, from thy manners, thy air, and discourse, that thou art far beyond thy seemings.'

'My friends,' resumed Ralph, 'in truth, were above the villein rank; they gave me good learning. I am a

* Slaves were not prohibited in England till the gentle reign of Henry II. being sold with cattle on the lands.

man of Kent, and would be a soldier: I served as such, under Egbert, and his son Ethelwolp, our present King. I was among his Guards, and frequently followed him to Winchester, where he kept a splendid court, it being the metropolis of Wessex. There I saw, and seeing, loved my late lost wife, then attendant on a courtly Dame. A comrade convincing me that her beauty was the designed victim to a great Personage, I prevailed on my Ella to make me her lawful protector. Our escape was attended and befriended by Providence. After many months wanderings, I acceded to Ella's primary wish of returning to this, her native villa. Her mother having nursed the Ethling, the Earl and Halfladen shewed us great favour, and appointed

me chief Forester of Chiviot. I was too happy : I idolized Ella : she was best among the best, and fairest among the fair, and therefore I stand deservedly corrected, by Heaven thus early in life taking her from me into its highest bliss. My Ella ! I endure life only on account of thy children !'

Here the good and pious Archibald delivered a long and meet discourse on resignation, till curiosity, his leading trait, impelled him to advert to other subjects, and to entreat Ralph would tell him the history of Chiviot Fort; that thereby he might be enabled properly to comport himself in the family, disclaiming all tendencies to gossiping. A kind of smile appearing on the Forester's dejected countenance, he thus began :

‘ You tell me that you remember the

good and great Earl Sigfrith; he having no children, adopted Renne, his only sister's eldest son: she had married (much against Sigfrith's wishes) Beauchamp, Earl of Mountmorin, in Normandy, and fell an early victim to that vile man's barbarities. Young Renne, her son, educated under his uncle's care, and richly endowed by nature, became the inheritor of Sigfrith's public and private virtues: he was gentle as a lamb, yet in arms bold as a lion; early addicted to piety, and, as many persons thought, from a too sensible and tender mind, more influenced than was requisite by the present superior of our monastery, * Jonston.

* In these times each Castle had adjoining to it a religious house, which by its art commonly governed the family.

If all monks were Jonstons, the church would not be, as I fear it is, branded for its avarice and domineering spirit, for he is what the learned Clerks tell us the primitive Bishops were. The young Renne being sent to see service in the wars, Beauchamp, his wicked father, took that opportunity for offering Sigfrith a visit. It was reluctantly accepted. Beauchamp thinking the Earl lived too long, and thereby kept him from lording it over Renne and Chiviot, mingled certain tasteless poisons, an art in which he was a great adept, into the Earl's viands. Though meant to be slow in its effects, which were shewn in a gentle decay, Beauchamp thought it too slow, therefore gave him a double portion, more than once. In the last mixture offered him, the Earl nauseating the smell, returned the cup,

and died instantly. Beauchamp being alone with Sigfrith, in sudden terror called in the servants from the lobby.*

The old Seneschal, who had harboured suspicion, from seeing Beauchamp always throw any liquor that the Earl had tasted into the fire, directly seized and secured the remaining draught; then ordering the servants to imprison Beauchamp, which they did very willingly, insisted on his drinking the fatal residuary wine. Force became necessary; they drenched it down his throat, locked him up, and before morning he expired in sullen agonies. The Seneschal directly surrendered himself, with an account of

* The servants always attended near their masters, bells being a very late invention; hence we see so many unnecessary lobbies, even now, in very old Castles.

the whole black action, to the hundred-ary meeting, and he was honourably acquitted.

Earl Renne's sorrow on the loss of his benefactor, attended with circumstances so retrograde to honour in Beauchamp, became undescribably afflictive; he had greatly esteemed the Seneschal, yet it was thought proper he should be removed far distant. Though amply provided for, the good old man, affectionately attached to Renne, never more knew comfort. On his death-bed, fervently requiring the Earl's forgiveness, he complied. Our Vavasor attended at this moving scene.

'I do,' said Renne, 'from my soul forgive thee, Seneschal; but mark my words, Vavasor, blood will not depart from Beauchamp's guilty house, with-

out atonement being rendered by me or mine.'

The room in which the murderer expired is now walled up from the house, and never used (of late too frequently used) but for torturing offenders. Frightful yells and shrieks are frequently heard in it, supposed to be from Beauchamp's ghost; more probably from bats, ravens, and other birds, who force themselves thro' the Tower's disjointed windows.'

'Pray Heaven,' says Archibald, 'my master may not be lodged near it!—not that I am a dastardly loon, but we natives of the Isles are gifted with second-sight, and I often see, often hear, strange things. I pray ye, Ralph, proceed.'

'Not all the holy acts of devotion, not all the pious benefactions to our

monastery here, nor repeated beneficence towards his unworthy brother, whom he suffered to remain at Mountmorin, could tranquilize the tender mind of gentle Earl Renne. He soon betook himself to the wars, which King Egbert was then engaged in, preluding the reduction of the heptarchy into our present happy monarchy. At Warwick, where Egbert held a plenary Court,* in a great carousal given in the Castle, Renne first beheld and became enamoured with Editha, surnamed the Moss-rose of Mercia, from her singular beauty. He fought, and

* These Courts were occasionally held in the large cities, at the great festivals; the neighbouring nobility attending, and often contributing to the great expence and rich gifts given by the King (for there were no stationary Courts as now), and here often the Whitn. Gamot, or assembled councils, from the various divisions met, for the discharge of all public business.

won her from Earl Morcar : never was a happier union. She inherits every virtue of her great house, and possesses, if possible, every endowment of her late Lord, gentelized, or rather feminized. They possessed every thing this world could give, save an heir to their family : at length, after several years, the united petitions of all ranks were accomplished, by the declared pregnancy of the Halfladen. Within six weeks of this joyfully expected event, the Earl was suddenly and unwillingly summoned, from a considerable distance, to quell an insurrection on the borders, of which he was Lord Warden, and he went the more reluctantly, as Joyce, the old and faithful attendant on the Halfladen, was confined with a broken leg : her second demoiselle was also absent, attending

a dying father. Prowling, therefore, alone one evening, round the Fort, the luckless Halfladen was assaulted by a vicious monkey, who had just broken his chain. Her screams soon congregated the servants. She was thrown on the ground, and seemingly lifeless. Within half an hour she became a mother to an apparent lifeless daughter. Never was house so confused! no one single preparative! no help, save that in the ignorant villa, but at a considerable distance!—the mother, to all appearance, ~~being~~—no one to give orders!

Poor old Joyce, half-distracted, commanded one of the young attendant maidens to carry the babe directly to a young woman, who was that morn-brought to bed, (it was Cicely, and

her child was my Ella) bidding her to foster it with all possible care. The child, to the surprize of all, lived; and was soon removed with Cicely to the Fort, whilst Ella was sent out to nurse.

The Halfladen remained in imminent danger for many weeks, has never since known a day's health, and consequently the Earl became almost in a state of desperation. Long was it before they could prevail upon him to visit the poor little murderess, as he termed his infant: he rather shrunk from the child, observing, they paid him no compliment in saying Agitha (so the child was named) was like him, for he never beheld so ugly a baby; and in truth so she was, and very distorted. They likened her face to a monkey; (no wonder, her mother's

fright considered) to me she appeared more like a person dying in agonies. This first unfavourable impression never appeared erased in Renne, yet no parent could be more properly attentive to a child. Alas! the mental and bodily qualities of this Dame are congenial; she is the very reverse of her parents. Part of her haughty pride and cruelty are attributed to old Cicely, whom she still retains much with her, and, as a favourite, is detested by all the household and village. As my Ella's mother, I may be partial to her, but sincerely think she is falsely accused: to her grand-children and myself she is ever kind; and when our dear Ella died, she was thought by many to be distracted. When Ella was about ten years old, she was introduced, out of regard to her mother, to

the painful pre-eminence of attending upon the Ethling as her play-mate; and never girl suffered more! The patience with which she endured Agitha's ill usage, recommended her so much to the Earl and Halfladen, that wishing to liberate her from the envy and hatred of Agitha, they recommended her into the service of Earl Athelstan's Dame, where, as before related, I first met my darling.

‘Soon after our return here, Earl Renne's health and spirits became impaired; he was recommended the trial of his native air. The poor Halfladen's distress was great, as her ill health prevented her from accompanying him. Alas! within a month his train returned, bearing the black tidings of his death. He had left his suite, to follow, and passing with only one at-

tendant, through a great forest near Mountmorin, was either slain and robbed by that servant, or by a fell banditti, who often ravage those parts. The servant and his horse were never heard of. After long search, our Earl's servants found his mangled and disfigured corpse in so putrid a state, that it was necessary to be entombed directly at Mountmorin. To that great patrimony succeeded Pierre de Beauchamp (nephew to our Earl), as male heir of that house. He came, soon after his uncle's death, professedly as suitor to the Ethling, but disgusted with her person and manners, soon returned; and this having been repeatedly the case with several noble gentlemen, has mingled acrimony with native sourness; to which increased pride and a love of tyranny have been con-

considerably added, by King Ethelwolph's acknowledging her Halfladen of Chiviot. She is esteemed to be of a very amorous constitution, and is believed to be gone in pursuit of a nameless and unattended warrior, who seeking (late one night) the hospitality of this Fort, was received, detained, and soon after acknowledged her intended husband; till unhappily meeting Ellen, he became so apparently attached to her, that the enraged Agitha banished him from her presence, forbidding myself and children her premises, on pain of imprisonment and torture, though the acknowledged servants of the Halfladen of Warwick.

‘ In this state you find us, earnestly expecting and wishing for that day when our Halfladen's health will permit her setting forward for Warwick; and

thereby removing from us as undutiful, scornful, and atrocious behaviour as ever parent received from a child. The Warwick retainers on that house, commanded by the long-approved Edric, attend in readiness to escort their Dame, and (as it has been suggested) requisitely to guard her personal safety here. Neither the Halfladen, nor any who have the honour to serve her, will, I am confident, form a wish for her removal until your Thane is perfectly recovered. Miserable would be the man, (subdued by sickness) and such a man left under the protection of so depraved, so unstable, cruel, and meretricious a woman as the person who now commands in Chiviot!

The Scottish Thane being greatly refreshed by the soporific effects of Oswald's recipe, was very unwillingly re-

moved from quarters he much approved, into a large and magnificent apartment in Chiviot's Fort, leading out of the great hall, through well-barricaded lobbies; and accessible only on the other side by a private stair case into the monastery. Messages worthy the politeness of later centuries having passed between the Halfladen and Thane, the physical person expected being arrived, the Leeches conjunctly examined the state of their patient's wound. Their opinion was decisive as to the extracting a part of the dirk still remaining in the shattered bone.

'Fear not, wise healers,' said the Thane, 'fear not to speak unmanacled truth: I have been inured to, and can bear pain. At best it must be a long case: suffer me to return to the Forester's; and thereby remove an inter-

loping stranger from trespassing on a noble family.'

This being reported to the Halfladen by the returning messenger, she laid a polite embargo on the invalid, in her's and her daughter's name, not to admit a thought of quitting a family who ever were hospitable to strangers.

'It is, then, requisite,' said the Thane, 'I should have some little time to prepare before the operation takes place: I wish not to leave this world (if Heaven so decrees) without expressing my repentance for many offences; or to die apparently ungrateful to my friends. I pray ye, send me some lettered clerk, to make my last testament; I then, with a mind more composed, shall request your good Abbot Jonston to shrive me.'

Such was the ignorance of the age,

that no one person could be found within the vicinage who could cypher, as writing was then termed.

‘ Call to me, then,’ continued the Thane, ‘ the worthy Vavasor, Father Jonston, Ralph, and Archibald, and let them witness the verbal disposition of my worldly concerns. Mark me, friends,—I give to the Halfladen of Warwick my rich gem’d brotch ; my string of Oriental pearls, (presents of the King and Queen of Scotland) to her daughter, the Ethling. To this monastery an hundred merks; to all, and each present, and also to Oswald, the like sum. I give my largest farm in Lanark to Ralph, the Forester; the mansion and demesnes adjoining (round which the Clyde so fantastically meanders) to Ellen, his beloved daughter; and the southern farm to thee, my

dear old Archibald. To my brother I give Selim, my Arabian horse, my hauberk,* and broadino; and bid him by his valour deserve the bequest. The remains of my treasures and lands (all the gift of my Sovereign) I give to my honoured father; requesting him to bestow largely upon the church in Murray, where, with my ancestors, I desire to be interred. Archibald, deliver my valued signet to my father: may it long be the family's impress; a memento to excite their loyalty; a remembrance that all they possess is deduced from Kingly bounty! I die in charity with all the world. Should the enemy who occasions, perchance, my early death, ever appear, a dying subject re-

* *Hauberk*; armour, composed of steel rings, which guard, yet turn pliantly with the body.

quests King Kenneth to confine him for life, not to deprive him of life.'

Greatly afflicted, much revering, all attending left the room save Archibald and Ralph, when the latter thus addressed his benefactor :

'Thane, thy generosity astonishes me! I pray thee resume thy donation—we shall not want——'

'By the holy Saints,' said the Thane, interrupting Ralph, 'I will not recall a single bequest. Oh, Ralph! all my earthly joys (were I to live) are centred in thy lovely daughter; and shall I leave her, with whom (with thy permission) I had meant to spend my life, not in affluence? Till I saw her, love never inhaled this bosom: the quitting Ellen alone imbitters death. Should I survive, yourself and child (confirming my wished-for happiness)

shall behold me, through life, respecting her as a sovereign princess. I know thou art greater than thou wishest to appear—What am I? The offspring of an inferior family, in an inferior clan? Great only in my Sovereign's condescending partiality. Know me for the fortunate *Dalzell*.'

'Great Power,' said the Forester, 'have I and mine then the honour of thus being noticed by the rescuer of King Alpin's murdered corse, by the conqueror of Pictish armies, and by the atchiever of domain, even from the Orcades to Antoninus's wall, to the immortal glory of King Kenneth!'

'True as holy writ,' said Archibald.

'Concealment and subterfuge, mighty warrior,' resumed the Forester,

‘end on my part ; the secret which for eighteen years has remained closeted in my bosom now expands to you, and you alone. Know you the bearings of this signet ?’

‘That of the puissant house of Kent—the half-moon bespeaking the second son,’ said Dalzell. ‘That I was,’ resumed the Forester. ‘But if fame says true (my brother’s family being extinct) mine and thy Ellen is now the only daughter of Edmund Earl of Kent, and not unworthy even the Dalzell.’

‘And that thou art, great Earl,’ said Archibald, ‘a Kentish man, sent messenger to Kenneth’s court, told me: They now had no Earl, and marvelled King Ethelwolph did not repair their loss.’

The Thane expressing his joy, his in-

finite respect for, and obligations to Earl Edmund, the Forester thus replied :

‘ Cease, cease, Dalzell ! Be it our first object to see your health reinstated, and then (but not till then) remain I only as Forester of Chiviot. Ill tongues and false friends abound ; I have, by the dear offence of depriving Ethelwolph of my late loved Ella, excited his most poignant displeasure : cautious must be the methods taken to reclaim honours, only desirable on my childrens’ account. May I depend on thy secrecy, Archibald ? No person in this Fort or neighbourhood knows me, but as the Forester.’

Archibald invoked every Scottish Saint to witness his intended secrecy ; declaring no tortures, nothing but sav-

ing Edmund's life should unbar this secrecy.

‘ I require, on my part,’ said Daltzell, ‘ the like concealment. Think me not a vain bragger; but should my royal Master know the sad condition I am now in, he would, in person, here augment the trouble I so unwillingly give the Halfladen. For the love of Heaven, Earl Edmund, let me once more behold (it may be for the last time) thy Ellen !’

‘ She shall attend thee. Suffused in tears for thy sufferings, I left her with the Halfladen: her's is the most tender and susceptible of minds. As thou hopest for her father's relinquishing to thee this his treasure, say not to her one syllable of thy love; say as little as possible to my child on any subject.’

There was not occasion for this preliminary caution in the ensuing interview. Ellen, like another Niobe, appeared dissolved in woe; sobs were her only vociferation. The Thane kissing her lily hand, could only invoke Heaven to protect her! At length, in faltering accents she cried, 'Poor Thane! would I could suffer for thee! Never, never, never will I forget thee, poor Thane!'

She was so much agitated, and the Thane so greatly affected, that Ellen was directly removed to the Halfpenny's apartment; whose tender and humane heart led her to sympathize with every son and daughter of affliction. It required some time, on the part of Dalzell, to recover his usual calmness and true philosophy. Holy Jonston granted him full and deserv-

ed absolution; which being closed with those rites esteemed so sacredly indispensable in the Romish church, the Thane, with a firm voice, entreated the operation might begin; conjuring Oswald not to spare the lancet, remembering that his occupation had rendered it familiar. As surgery in these dark times (with all other arts) was little known, long and excruciating pain attended the extraction of the dirk's point from the shivered bone. The Thane repeatedly fainted, but uttered not a single groan. When safely placed in bed, the much affected Leeches expressed a tremulous joy. 'All, I trust,' said Oswald, 'is safe: the most perfect quietness, with opiates, are our staple trust.' And being faithfully adhered to for three days, the sons of Esculapius declared hope be-

gan to prevail over fear; but all depended on the patient's being kept calm, and free from all noise; which could be easily observed, from the happy seclusion of his trebly-enclosed apartment.

While the interested friends of Dalzell were thus encouraging hope, soon after noon a loud blast was sounded from Chiviot's top. The turreted watchman announced the Chiviot herald's approach. 'The Ethling returns,' sounded loud through the Fort, while each officer and servant sought, with evident trepidation, their appointed station. The Forester, Ellen, and Hugo, happily escaped unnoticed thro' the postern; while Edric, assembling his band, ranged the retainers (resting on their spears) round the passage leading to the Halfladen's apartment,

commanding them to express all possible respect to the Ethling as she passed. 'And what,' said she, upon viewing their arrangement, 'what means this mighty muster of the Warwick varlets? If old crones are become so precious, the hag Cicely must have a guard. The Halfladen of Chiviot requires not mercenary guardians; let her horn sound from the Fort, and a whole country will rise in her defence. The old Halfladen shall repent these orders.'

'They proceed not from her,' replied Edric, 'but are dictated by me, who, with these my comrades, live but to respect, and if requisite to defend, Earl Leofrid's heir; and as such, our liege Dame.'

'This,' said Agitha to her Seneschal, 'originates from the officious Vavasor;

and so it was, for he was lately informed that Agitha's principal counsellor, Grim (a desperate and wicked Blackamoor, who governed her stables) had, in his cups, dropped certain threats against the old Halfladen.' Agitha, ordering the Chamberlain's attendance in the hall, thus delivered her commands: 'Get ready the hall-chamber for your future master: the Paladin of Alsace no longer conceals his high rank, but returns here this evening. Inform the accursed Forester and his diabolic daughter, that if seen within these premises, Grim is commanded to plunge them into the deepest dungeon.'

With much hesitation and fear, the Seneschal informed Agitha that the state apartment was occupied by a wounded stranger (through her mother's orders) and could not be evacu-

ated without endangering his life. Her rage was indescribable.

‘By the tail of Belzebub,’* she cried, ‘this moment shall Warwick’s witch quit my castle, with all her detested train.’ She proceeded as fast as her distorted and limping form could move towards the stairs. Edric advanced: ‘You go not further, Ethling, unless I am suffered to attend you into your mother’s chamber.’

The frantic Agitha, like a tigress, flew at Edric, deeply traiting his face with her nails; for he had caught her up in his arms, and returning into the hall, set her gently down; and bow-

* Every great personage (as may be instanced in England’s Kings, even to the time of James the First) had a peculiar, and often a very singular oath of their own. As Agitha professedly scoffed at all religion, the arch-fiend appears to be her tutelary friend.

ing, retired. She stamped, she foamed, she execrated, till quite exhausted. Falling on a chair, she called for wine.

‘Then, then,’ resumed the Dame, ‘will I instantly enter this vagrant’s room, and let the pliant dunghill be his bed.’

Jonston advanced, for the whole family were assembled: ‘Remember, Dame,’ said he, ‘your fair character respecting hospitality will all be forfeited by so uncourteous an action. The sick man is of noble race, and bears himself as such: he is young, handsome, and so distinguished a warrior and Thane in Kenneth’s court, that should he receive any outrage, his King (heading troops not yet disbanded, and flushed with Pictish victories) will assuredly wreak their just vengeance on your castle and person. I know, alas! how

little you regard me, or my order; but the charity of that order impels me to render you this advice.'

Agitha, apparently softened, declared she would directly visit the stranger. Oswald violently opposed the design; but the Ethling reverting to extreme passion and violent denunciations against the Thane, the Leech acceded to her desire, as the lesser evil. Dalzell being apprized of the intended honour, was bolstered up to receive the unwelcome visitant.

'Who art thou,' quoth Agitha, 'that darest thus take possession of Chiviot's best chamber in its Halfladen's absence? Turn out, and thereby accommodate thy expected superior; and think thyself happy in being lodged in a loft.'

'My bleeding situation,' replied Dalzell, 'led compassionate friends to place

me here, much against my inclination; being ever an unwilling trespasser: your warmth, Halfladen, is just; these friends will remove me directly; and may Heaven shower its choicest rewards on hospitable Chiviot !'

The melodious voice and great civility of the Thane somewhat affected the hard heart of Agitha: she directly and rudely let the sun in upon his weakened eyes, starting backwards as being greatly struck with his fine tho' pale countenance; for she was very susceptible of manly beauty, and never beheld masculine graces without certain tender feelings.

'I suppose,' said the Lady, 'we shall soon have your weeping wife and children to favour us with their residence?'

This query the sick man justly thought signified a desire to know if

he was married. Forming a polite answer suitable to Agitha's reputed character, he replied : ' I am not blest with such tender connections: mine has been a soldier's life; and I begin to credit one of our Scotch wizards, who predicted Love would never assail me on the Caledonian side of Chiviot's hills.'

Agitha's superlative vanity instantly interpreted this speech in her own favour. ' You shall not be removed from this apartment: the Paladin may mount higher : I shall see you often. Oswald, as you value my favour, be careful of this stranger.'

With much affected grace and graciousness she quitted the room, directly calling for Cicely into her private closet. ' Here are fine doings,' said the Ethling. ' I blame thee not—such an infirm beldam could not repress this

intrusion. I hear the man is a noble Thane; he is very handsome, and much more gentle than the Paladin. We have made up our quarrel, and he returns here this night; but should he treat me as disrespectfully as formerly, and shew the least favour to Ellen, I shall discard him, and direct all my favours towards this noble stranger. Do you know his name?

Old Cicely, possessing the cunning of Agitha's tutelary friend, smiled approbation; declaring she knew not the Thane's name, or ought of the family's proceedings; for when its mistress was absent, she seldom troubled the household. She recommended to her Lady continued kindness towards the stranger, she having been assured he had legacied the Ethling in costly jewels,

which she delighted in, as adorning her agreeable person.

No sooner was Cicely dismissed than she went to her son-in-law's cot; and very kindly, and with much solicitude, requested the little family to leave the hamlet; foreseeing storms arising in their disfavour at the Fort; for she had seen Agitha in close conversation with Grim, whose custom it was, upon returning from every absence, by lashes and pinching to extort from his stable attendant every minute occurrence that had passed; relating each, with due exaggeration, to his mistress.

Cicely well knew the Paladin's extreme love for Ellen, and equal hatred towards Agitha; therefore pressed thus strongly the Forester's immediate

flight. He could not be prevailed on to quit his station; nor would Ellen leave her father. At length, a compromise took place, and Cicely was allowed to take Hugo under her protection. She passed on with him towards her cot; when meeting some of his playfellows, they asked where he was going? Cicely, with much asperity, replied: 'If to be drowned in the Foss, what's that to you? Keep off, or I will call Grim to correct you.'

Away fled the boys, perfectly assured Hugo would meet a watery death; yet the dread of Grim suffered them to keep secret this intelligence. In the dusk of evening, Cicely (having keys of all the doors) conveyed Hugo, unseen, into the Halfladen's apartment. Old Joyce willingly guaranteed the boy's safety, locking him up in an ad-

jacent room, where Editha should not see him; it being determined by her junto of friends to keep from her gentle mind as much as possible all that was passing, and expected to pass, within the Castle.

Ralph was no sooner left alone than he sent for a worthy Ceorl, his neighbour, and dispatched him to the adjacent town, (where the Shire-gemote was then assembled) to inform the Vavator of Agitha's proceedings; requesting his immediate return. The Ceorl's speed was augmented by meeting Grim, the Black, with a ragamuffin train, going to seize the Forester and his daughter. Greatly as they were beloved by the villeins, yet such was their fear of Agitha and her agents, that none durst rise in defence of the devoted sufferers. Ralph was thrust into a deep,

dark, putrid dungeon; so low that he could not stand upright; whilst his bound hands prevented keeping off the vermin which inhabited this horrid region. Through tenderness to the fair-sex, Grim mitigated poor Ellen's sentence, by confining her to the Bats' Tower; a place, of all others, most abhorrent to her timidity, having a natural aversion to bats, and unovercomeable terrors respecting the murderer's ghost; believed by all the hamlet to be the tremendous genius of that black abode. These cruel commands of the Ethling were in consequence of Grim's information, that the Forester's family had been much with the Halfladen during her absence, and had introduced the Scottish Thane into the Fort, who was the declared lover of Ellen: Unhappy Ellen! now doubly the ob-

ject of Agitha's jealousy and revenge, respecting both the Thane and the Paladin. Upon the expeditious Ceorl's arrival at the hundredary town, hearing the assembly were dismissed, and that the Lord Warden, Earl Walthe-
lof, the Vavasor, and a traveller lately arrived, were together, the messenger's zeal for Ralph carried him, without ceremony, into the private room where this triumvirate were sitting. The sad tale, strongly coloured, greatly affected the hearers; even the stranger expressed uncommon horror.

‘Return,’ said the Lord Warden, ‘directly; and if possible assure the prisoners of immediate liberation: the instant my requisitely official attendants can be assembled, I shall set forward for Chiviot; hoping to reinstate justice and freedom in the family of

my late and much respected friend, Earl Renne.'

Soon after the close of day, the Paladin (according to his former mode) entered Chiviot Fort, unattended. Seeing only servants in the hall, he called for old Cicely, to whom he had ever paid great civility, as the confidant of the woman he abhorred, (yet wished to secure) and as the grammar of his adored Ellen. The crafty Crone (really much affected by Ralph and Ellen's barbarous treatment) would willingly have avoided the honour of this demanded interview. The Paladin's first enquiry was after Ellen.

'She is,' replied Cicely, 'in disgrace, and under confinement.'

He violently execrated Agitha; enquiring the cause of Ellen's imprisonment.

‘The cause,’ said furious Agitha, entering the room that moment, ‘the cause is for her impudent and constant attendance upon a wounded Scotch Thane, whom our precious old Half-laden has received and placed in that chamber, designed for you, during my absence.’

‘A Scotch Thane! I hate the very word Scotch; a faithless nation, ever inimical to France. Who, and what is he?’

Cicely hoping to subdue the Paladin’s rising choler, by depreciating the stranger, replied,—‘He came attended only by a frouzy shabby old fellow, and I warrant is Captain of some Pictish or Scottish banditti, who scour our marches, if one may judge by his shield, which little Hugo took me privately to see; it is kept hid in

a loft; it quite shocked me, for my husband was hanged, and, as I am a living soul, it shewed a man on a high gibbet.'

The Paladin turned pale with rage.
'And did it bear any writing?'

'Yes,' said Cicely, 'little Hugo learns his primmer, and said the words were *I d a-re*.'

'*I d a re!* the plagues of hell confound you! *I Dare* was the word; the rascal is my avowed enemy, and before I sleep, by my father's ghost, I will have his heart's blood. In that chamber,' said he, striding towards the door, 'say you the cursed miscreant lies?'

Agitha instantly betaking herself to those sharp and missive weapons with which Nature had embellished her long

and frightful fingers, vehemently flew at her lover, impeding his haste, and screaming violently for help. Edric and his band, from the adjacent lobby, instantly entered.

‘Seize that madman,’ said she, ‘or he will butcher our poor sick defenceless stranger.’

‘The warrior,’ replied Edric, ‘is under our Halfladen’s protection; and the way to assail him must be cut through Warwick’s long proved band.’

The Paladin, apalled, returned to his former station. A most virulently abusive dialogue immediately commenced between Agitha and the Paladin. He insisted on Ellen’s immediate release. She averred it should be without her head, if he dared even to threaten the stranger’s life. This pleasant altercation had been long, and

probably would have extended through the night, when a mighty trampling of horses, with shrill blasting horns, and sounds of martial music, from the grand portal, assailed their ears. The Lord Warden and his officers were announced. The Paladin shrunk backwards; whilst the Proteus Virago, ever present with herself, shook him in an Amazonian stile.

‘Sit down by me in this Auriel window,’ said she; ‘let us appear in friendly converse; and if you value your life, accord with all I say.’ He became tremulously obedient.

The Dame, having commanded all possible placidity into her distorted countenance, ‘grinning horribly a gastly smile,’ advanced, and thus addressed the unwelcome strangers: ‘This, in truth, is an unexpected ho-

nour; why would not the Lord Warden kindly apprize me of this condescension, that reception more meet for his dignity might have awaited him in Chiviot? I fear he will think us roysters, to be up at this late hour; but the Paladin of Alsace and myself have much business to settle previous to our intended union early to-morrow, or rather this morning, when we intend leaving England for ever.'

This specious tale was fabricated, as hoping Earl Walthelolf, hearing of her intended and sudden removal, might decline a disagreeable interference in family disputes, and accordingly return.

'Ethling of Chiviot,' replied the Earl, 'this is an intrusion upon you little wished for on my part. Invested with delegated power by King Ethelwolph,

to correct all and every abuse prevailing in these English borders, the bruit of illegal proceedings here necessarily impels me to inquire into the great abuse and cruel inflictions now prevailing in this Castle. I am informed you have unjustly and barbarously imprisoned servants appertaining to the much venerated and truly respectable Halfladen of Warwick, your ill-treated mother; and also that a certain Scottish warrior, who sought relevant courtesy in your Castle, is threatened with maltreatment, if not with death. I come therefore officially to demand the prisoners' immediate release, and to ascertain and confirm the stranger's safety. Never was officer more determined than myself, both in regard to public example, and from that infinite respect I owe to the memory of my late worthy

friend, your murdered father, and to the virtuous and noble Halfladen, Editha.'

This eulogium on parents ever detested, again set Agitha's passions in their highest ferment. 'And would,' retorted she, 'both were departed, both rotting together at Mountmorin! and would the officious Vavasor, who has brought all this disgrace upon me, were roasting in hell's hottest fire! No one since birth has been worse used than myself; and had you, Earl, spared your bold interference till to-morrow, it would then have been ineffectual: the jurisdiction of Ethelwolph would not have had any influence over a subject of King Charles le Chauve.'

'Take care, take care, Ethling,' retorted the Earl, 'how you fulfill your intended marriage with an impostor!

None but yourself ever heard of a Paladin of Alsace : no such dignity exists. Stranger, (speaking to the spurious Paladin) say, really who, and what you are ?'

The hitherto mute stranger was advancing to reply, when, seeing old Archibald thrusting through the crowded door, he stopped short, apparently much disordered. Archibald throwing himself before the Earl, with great vehemence thus spoke : ' He is no Paladin, Earl Walthelolf; he is the vile Macrae, Thane of Dumbritton, the assassinator of my dear master, the great Dalzell, Thane of Lanark, who now lies ill in that chamber in consequence of that man's treachery, for which offence Macrae is now outlawed by King Kenneth, and a great reward is offered for

his head. This is known to all Scotland, and I swear to you upon the holy Evangelists, and by Saint Columba and Saint Andrew, all I say is true. Seize him, Edric, thou art worthy the reward; and never will I flinch a word from what thou hast heard me aver.'

'No,' said Edric, 'the Warwick retainers are not mercenaries. If our Halfladen or the Lord Warden commands our most dangerous service, they will find us ready.'

'Be it so, brave fellow,' said Earl Walthelolf, 'I command thee to seize upon, and be answerable for the person of that accused man, till brought to the trial justice demands; and justice shall not be hoodwinked in his disfavour.'

Macrae talked highly of his own

valour and grandeur, of an expected train of bold rescuers, now lodged in Pepperden, a neighbouring Fort belonging to a great freebooter: he denied Archibald's accusations; but saying, '*This was not his time,*' quietly submitted to be led by Edric into the central tower, called the Keep, where the higher kind of prisoners were detained in comfortable quarters.

The various passions of Agitha were now almost wound up to a phrenzy. 'And why am I, base Earl,' said she, 'to be thus treated and exposed to that numerous and unnecessary scoffing train, that now follow, to crowd my hall, and augment thy vain parade of justice? Order their direct removal, or I will not answer a single interrogatory thy Mightiness may suggest.'

The truth was, that augmenting Earl Walthelolf's necessary official appendages, numbers of the villeins, led by curiosity, had increased the multitude of the Earl's followers. All immediately and expeditiously retired, save one old and decrepid looking man, who appeared fixed with his face towards the wall. Agitha, not unjustly, but violently offended at his contumacy, stepped close up to him, and vehemently insisted on his instant removal. The figure, remaining stationary, she forcibly assailed him, threatened, and required to know who *he* was, that durst thus disobey her commands? The man, turning quick upon her, and throwing off his old large and slopped hat, cried, 'BEHOLD !'

Agitha instantly fell, seemingly lifeless, on the floor; crowds of old and attendant servants, with concordant sounds, proclaimed, ‘*Earl RENNE!*—*it is Earl RENNE himself!*’

‘Verily so,’ replied the Earl; ‘and (continued Earl Walthelolf) providentially restored, after five years imprisonment by his false nephew, Beauchamp, in a dungeon at Mountmorin; restored in the critical time to save Chiviot from everlasting infamy.’

Plaudits of joy reverberated through the high-arched armour-hung hall. ‘Vavasor, (said Earl Renne) I pray thee stop this vociferous kindness, lest my Editha be disturbed, and enquire into the cause. As I before desired thee, let her be acquainted with my return in the most guarded manner: many hours must elapse before I shall

be sufficiently calm and duly prepared to see her. Remove that disgrace of my house (pointing to Agitha) into the iron-barred chamber; and, Vavasor, let her there be secured, and not harshly treated: never more will I behold her.'

She was removed before recovery of speech; but her violence, her inclination to bite, scratch, and assail all who were employed to remove her, shewed she was not insensible of her situation.

This good Earl was, as it may be supposed, variously and grievously affected.

'Suffer me, my friends, (said he) to retire a while, with my old and comfortable friend Jonston, into the Abbey, there, by devotion, to seek composure. See in me, beholders, the vanity of human wishes! all this disgrace and sorrow originates from my inordi-

nate desire of having an heir ; and never was man more cursed by the completion of his wishes. But, I fear me, not even this humiliation, nor my long and wretched personal sufferings, have yet atoned for the murder of Earl Sigfrith ; justice and mercy are equally the attributes of the Most High ; and the sins of Beauchamp were of the deepest dye !

Thus saying, Earl Renne passed on into the monastery ; the Lord Warden and his much affected train retired to the Vavasor's ; Walthelolf declaring, that though public business was finished, he should not quit Chiviot till the family became more tranquilized. The Vavasor and Edric determined to keep watch and guard through the night ; while Oswald was fully employed in attending upon the

suffering Forester and his daughter. When the former was drawn up from the dungeon, he appeared bent almost together; his legs were grievously knawed by the rats, while extreme pain and putrid air had occasioned an high fever; but he was sensible and calm; and when assured of Ellen's safety, with elevated eyes (crossing his breast) he became silent.

Oswald apprehended Ellen's case to be still more hopeless; she was, through terror, deprived totally of all sense; her jaw was fallen, and her eyes pointedly fixed; quick respiration and burning heat alone shewed symptoms of life. She was in this sad state removed into a quiet apartment, and consigned to the almost maternal care of Enna, the Vavasor's sister. By the prudent precaution of the servants all was kept still

in the Halfladen's and Dalzell's chambers.

The timely discovery of Macrae arose from Archibald's immoderate curiosity to see the supposed Paladin; to which purpose he had procured Gregory (a young Monk, greatly approved by Dalzell, because he could read to him) to stay with his master, while he went to augment the croud prevailing in the hall, and came in time to give his uncontrovertible evidence against the assassin. Old Cicely was in a deplorable situation. When disputes began to rise high between Agitha and Macrae, she opined it more safe to remove unnoticed to her cot. The inhabitants of the village, knowing the ferment that prevailed in the Fort, were upon the watch through the night, forming themselves into groups, earnest to hear

fresh intelligence. Their children, thus left, were also upon the ramble. A large party of boys meeting Cicely (fully persuaded she had drowned Hugo) most violently and abusively assaulted her, driving her before them with dreadful threats of vengeance: while she was crossing the church-yard, to her cot, to take the nearer way, as her persecutors thought, she hobbled over the thick planted graves. Being very unwieldy and lame, over one of those stoned hillocks she fell, and broke her leg, to the infinite delight and merriment of the young barbarians, who, shouting peans of joy, left the poor old creature in that dreadful situation. Long was it before her cries brought any neighbours to her relief, nor were they much more lenient; she was roughly moved to her cot by them,

and tauntingly told that she had met with her deserts, and that Oswald was better employed than in attending her.

In the morning he found her in agonies, from the too long neglected fracture ; her mind still more agonized. She incessantly called upon Agitha, saying she could not, would not die without seeing her ; and on the Ethling's peril insisted on her attendance.

‘ She is imprisoned (said Oswald) by her father, Earl Renne’s orders, who returned to Chiviot last night.’

Upon this information Cicely yelled in a most horrid dissonance ; and by throwing herself into distorted attitudes, again dislocated her lately set leg, refusing outrageously Oswald’s offers to replace it.

‘ Then (said Oswald) I will send one

of the Monks to persuade thee, and thou hadst best confess and be shrived, for as thou bearest thyself, thou wilt soon be dead.'

Her phrensical behaviour encreased; and when a young ecclesiastic attended, she refused confession, declaring his absolution was unavailing, for she had lived a wicked life; that the Devil was watching for her, and she had seen him twice peep through the curtains.

This being reported to Jonston, he replied, ' Let the poor suffering wretch alone for some hours, till the great subduer Pain lowers her strength and abates her animal spirits; then will she be reduced, and more meet for my purpose. How have I witnessed, in the closing scene of a most depraved life, the conciliatory, and, I trust, beneficial effects of bodily sufferings !'

In the morning early the Vavasor and Jonston visited Agitha: she was found by them sitting almost on the floor, her elbows resting on her knees, and covering her face with both hands. When first placed in confinement, upon all offensive weapons being forced from her, she solemnly swore never more to utter a syllable, or receive any nourishment; and she had pertinaciously adhered to this resolution. Vain, therefore, were all the gentle assurances of pardon offered from her father! vain all Jonston's representations of her wretched unrepentant state, and of the horrors attendant on an ensuing death like her's, which must prelude a dismal eternity. Agitha remained unmoved. The Vavasor, exasperated by such sullen contempt, grew warm, and severely reproached her; concluding all

by saying, 'and such unwomanly barbarous behaviour, to imprison, in that loathsome tower, the young and innocent Ellen! a person greatly your superior, lately the discovered child of a mighty Earl, the Earl of ——'

Agitha, with fiery flashing eyes, interrupted the Vavassor: 'and who (said she) has formed this accursed lie?'

'Her parent acknowledges her so to be, (replied the Vavassor) and vengeance due awaits her intended murderer.'

'This, this (cried Agitha) all proceeds solely from that old devil, Cicely; she outlies Satan: believe not a word she says;' closing her dehortation with most shocking imprecations upon Cicely's grey head.

'These curses,' replied Jonston,

‘I fear will soon be fulfilled; she is dying of a broken leg.’

‘From your tortures, I suppose, (said Agitha) and by that means she has been impelled to confess what your holiness and spite towards me dictated. I know you and your Order well; and therefore have ever treated you with deserved contempt.’

Thus saying, she threw herself on the floor, biting and tearing every thing within her reach. The Vavasor was preparing to speak.

‘Not a single word more,’ said Jonston; ‘my son, leave this wretched woman either to recollection or to be properly treated as a maniac.’ Taking the Vavasor aside, the Monk thus continued: ‘See you not some great and hidden mischief about to be providentially developed, by Agitha’s mistake-

ing your asseveration as to Ellen ? why should she otherwise have instantly recurred with such vehemence to Cicely ? Oh ! these wicked women have concealed between them some black iniquity ! we Monks have long been so persuaded : Agitha has ever repulsed us with haughtiness ; whilst Cicely has equally avoided us, with apparent terror. Leave her to me : I will instantly attend her. We Monks know how to extort.'

The Vavasor had been (before he visited Agitha) just informed of the Forester's high rank, by meeting Archibald, who thought (very gladly, from his communicative turn) the sick man's situation absolved him from his promise of secrecy, as devulgement might procure more attention and due respect. The Vavasor seemed not sur-

prized, observing he had long been assured the Forester's walk in life had been high: more care, he assured Archibald, could not be paid him; all possible respect should accompany this attention.

Jonston found Cicely (as he had predicted) much softened and subdued by intense pain; but no confession could be obtained by every common mode of exhortation. 'Cicely, (said the Monk) Oswald assures me your wound is mortifying, and that you will not live many hours; save yourself the bodily torture unwillingly ordered you by Earl Renne, who is determined to try if screws and pinchers will not lead you to confess your part of that black story, which has been extorted from Agitha.'

'Ah! holy blessed Monk,' cried Cicely, 'torture not that dear crea-

ture's tender form any further! screw me as you will; my pains cannot increase. I confess only a wicked life, and having too well loved the dear Ethling.'

'She repays your kindness (said the Monk) in most dreadful curses on your head; curses that will soon be accomplished.'

This intelligence seemed horridly to affect and afflict Cicely: she writhed, she raved, she howled; yet between these paroxysms vehemently vowed never to injure Agitha.

'Ah that I had a knife,' said she, 'I would cut out my tongue! Do try me!'

At that moment Jonston was called immediately to attend the Ethling, said to be dying. On this intelligence Cicely shrieked, fell backwards upon

her bed, and the Monk thought he left her dying, if not dead. Soon after the impassioned Agitha was left by the Vavasor and Monk, she became quiet, even to placidity.

‘I have been too warm, too virulent,’ said she, ‘against that dear old Cicely, ever my truest friend: I do repent me sorely. Fridswith, (speaking to one of her maids) I pray thee bring me my smallest coffer, and thou shalt from it select that cordial she so well likes, and bear it to her with assurances of kindness from me.’

The good-natured maiden with ready alacrity obeyed. The coffer was placed near the only and very dim window, for the benefit of light. Agitha, with continued composure, opened and smelt several bottles. ‘Here it is,’ said she; ‘tell Cicely I drank her health in

this most comfortable cordial.' No sooner had she drank, than dashing the bottle on the floor, she cried, ' Now I defy ye all; defy old Renne, old Cicely, and the Monk: and may everlasting curses wait upon each appertaining to Chiviot !'

She returned to her seat. Fear and apprehension of punishment kept the astonished attendants in doubtful conversation, whilst they should have sought earliest help for Agitha. She soon complained of extreme cold; and commanded to be placed on the bed. Further concealment could not be: Fridswith, in a kind of phrensy, proclaimed through the house that the Ethling had taken poison. It was some time before Oswald could be found.

' It is too late,' said he, ' for any antidote: ' a horrid death-like stupor per-

vades her whole ghastly and convulsed form.

‘Who is afraid of death,’ said Fridswith, ‘if this be all? I trust they will poison, not hang me.’

‘Not so fast,’ replied the Leech; ‘if she has not taken enough, her death will be lingering and painful; if too much, (which I apprehend, from its very sudden effects) she will awake in agonies, and die in tortures. This will not be speedily determined; all you can now do is to keep her quiet, and watch incessantly her movement.’

The repeatedly afflicted friends of Chiviot being assembled in consultation in the hall, unanimously determined never to acquaint Renne or Editha with this last fell action of Agitha’s; but to spare them afflictive thoughts, by representing her death as occasion-

ed by fits, the offspring of violent passion.

Jonston informed his coadjutors that Earl Renne still remained in friendly slumbers within the monastery, occasioned by sleepy herbs which they had mixed, the preceding evening, in some wine he was prevailed upon to drink, after exhausting himself by intense devotion. 'I left,' said he, 'my brethren watching and praying round the Earl's couch, that this best friend our society ever had might awake refreshed and renovated. I shall proceed directly and see if poor Cicely be living; if so, shall tell her (a short anticipation it will be, and an holy fraud, which Heaven sanctifies for good purposes) that Agitha is dead, as a means of further discovery from Cicely.'

'Lose no time,' said Oswald; 'the

mortification is began, and brings its attendant transitory ease, which may incline her to confession, and the more, as thinking Agitha is removed from earthly injuries. Vavator, (continued Oswald) the Halfladen is risen; let us go, and with all circumspection relate to her Earl Renne's return.'

'And I,' said Earl Walthelolf, 'will call forth old Archibald and my judicial attendants, and hear the defence (vague and false it must be) of the assassin Macrae. If found guilty, I shall send an immediate messenger to acquaint King Kenneth of the result; and to learn his pleasure relative to the disposal of Macrae's person.'

The Vavator and Leech having demanded their accustomed entrée into the Halfladen's apartment, found her placid, and full of enquiries respecting

the noisy joy she had heard the preceding night from the hall, alluding to the festivity prevailing on her daughter's declared lover being returned.

‘No, Halfaden,’ replied the Vavasor, ‘it proceeded from a better cause: prepare to meet the greatest and most grateful turn of fortune this world can afford you.’

‘Alas,’ said she, ‘it can afford me no joy! All my joy lies entombed at Mountmorin.’

‘Not so, Dame,’ continued the Vavasor, ‘that sound of joy originated from a well asserted report that Earl Renne is living.’

‘Ah, no! it is a false, false world! My cruel daughter fabricates this report, wishing to dash me from Hope’s pinnacle still deeper than ever into the dark dell of misery.’

‘Agitha in this respect is innocent,’ said the Vavasor: ‘she is in fits, and confined to her chamber.’

‘Oswald,’ subjoined Editha, ‘see she is well attended: may sickness soften her obdurate spirit!’

‘You seem, Dame,’ resumed the Vavasor, ‘not to regard our intelligence?’

‘Indeed I do not: no atom of sanguineness or self flattery remains; resignation and acquiescence have happily succeeded those delusive hopes I once entertained that my beloved husband might be living; but after the trying account brought me by his returning servants, who had viewed his mangled corpse, confirmed by the present Lord Mountmorin, all hope is destroyed, and even a random thought on the subject is nought but self-delu-

sion. I marvel that persons of your wisdom can listen to such idle tales.'

'No, praised be Heaven!' continued the Vavasor, 'this is no idle tale. The present spurious Lord of Mountmorin seized upon Earl Renne, and has kept him confined there these five years; having murdered poor Jaques, his servant, and so mangled his corpse that it passed undiscovered for that of our Earl. His escape is wonderful: he is returned in health, though much altered with his long imprisonment. We have seen and conversed with him; as you, noble Editha, will have the happiness of doing this day.'

Looking mournfully up, the Halfpadden tremulously exclaimed: 'Do not deceive me: I pray ye do not deceive me!'

‘ Upon our’s, and your Christian faith, Dame, we swear that the Earl is safely returned, and now sleeping off, we trust, his great fatigue within the monastery.’

The Halfladen sliding off her chair, upon her knees seem rapt in devotion: inclining to faint, Oswald, by using his accustomed recipe, prevented it. ‘ Carry me to him directly,’ said Editha—‘ Yet no—seeing me, upon first awaking, may overcome his weakened spirits—Leave me, to seek all possible and necessary composure—Let us not imbitter my Earl’s joy, by mentioning ought of the Ethling’s undutiful behaviour to me. I forgive her; she is a worse torment to herself than to others. This sickness, and her father’s return, may subdue her turbulent spirit. De-

pend upon it the Almighty will not partially bless Earl Renne !'

In this justly heroic manner did the noble Lady receive intelligence that would have shaken a more robust form or a less truly religious, and therefore a less firm mind.

How dreadfully contrasted was Jonston's interview with Cicely ! He found her (as predicted by Oswald) free from bodily pain ; yet death's cadaverous look deeply traited her face with every and all its appendent horrors. She enquired earnestly after the Ethling. ' Gone, gone !' said the Monk, ' but not without confession : your's is also demanded ; the instruments of torture are ready.'

She would not credit the account of Agitha's death, till being told it was

by poison, she hid her face, and bursting into tears, cried—‘ Then, so it is! And ah! I fear——’

Her paroxysms of mind and body becoming more dreadful than ever, the humane Monk, greatly affected, dealt only in soothing and soft exhortation; averring the latest confession and repentance might avail. All fear of injuring Agitha being thus removed by the belief of her death, the poor old woman became less agitated. ‘ Yes, yes,’ said she, ‘ I know there is an heaven and an hell: could that dear and injured Ella be recalled, I would confess directly.’

‘ You owe confession to her children equally,’ replied Jonston; ‘ and if not made fully, and directly, I swear by the Most High instantly to leave you to torture and desperation, and

never more to behold your wretchedness.'

She grasped his habit with amazing force, calling him dear and holy father.

'My child,' said she, 'my child! where art thou gone?' (Then fixing her glaring and prominent eyes on Jonston, with a kind of horrid resolution) — 'for such was she to me; Ella was the real Ethling of Earl Renne, and, I fear me, poisoned by my poor wicked child. I had no share in that bad action, and did all I could to prevent it; but my first sin, in changing the children, immediately after I received the true Ethling, has occasioned my own child's death, and I fear ———'

Then distorted and yelling louder than ever, Jonston became so variously agitated, that a violent fit ensued. The fresh air soon recovered the Monk.

The friends of Earl Renne by that time were assembled round him. All other attendants being ordered away, Jonston, greatly affected, related to them Cicely's confession; declaring, that he never would leave for a moment the poor dying sinner. Holy hope on her behalf was not quite extinguished, and to save a soul was man's noblest occupation.

Upon his return to Cicely, nought appeared but contrition, clouded by despair. He so leniently and comfortably exercised the latter, that she herself requested to render before him and the Vavasor a still more copious confession; which she faintly did, after continually stopping for breath, to this effect:

'I was left near this village by beggars, and became a slave to a cruel

Ceorl. No one ever suffered more, or learnt less. A travelling pedlar (a Dane and kind of musician) was much courted to the house by my wicked mistress. By him I soon became with child: the enraged tything-man obliged him to marry me. My exceeding love for him was soon turned into bitter hatred, from his barbarous usage of me.

‘ Luring me one day upon Chiviot, he beat me so cruelly, that I was left for dead. Travellers found and relieved me. Before he descended Chiviot, in his intended flight to the Danes, he met a well known rich Brusa, whom he robbed and murdered. Being pursued, and taken, in a few days he was hanged and gibbeted on Chiviot. My deadly hatred of him led me, with half the country, to go to

a kind of wake held under the gallows. To wreak my revenge, I lay concealed all night near the place, and early in the morning, with a great stick beat violently his distorted body, (mad I surely was) talking to it in the most brutal language. Not content, I scrambled up into the cart, which still remained under the gallows, having an unnatural and vehement desire to see his face. It was so shocking that I fell from the cart, and have ever since been lame. How I crawled home, I know not. There I remained very ill for two months.

‘ When Agitha was born, she was a weakly child, but not distorted; nor did the shocking likeness of her father’s corpse appear for many months. The very evening after her birth, you re-

member, Vavasor, the Halfladen was unexpectedly delivered of a daughter. All was confusion in the Fort, the child seemed dying for want of a wet nurse. She was sent me to be suckled, by an ignorant young girl, wrapped only in a mantle. The maiden returned directly to bring the child's cloathing. I was left alone, and thought the babe was dying, when the devil (certainly so) bid me change the children: then Earl Renne might have a living, not a dead child; mine and myself would be well provided for: I directly changed the babies cloathing. An old woman of the village was sent to attend me. I never let Agitha be taken from me, upon pretence of keeping her warm; and feigned being too ill to be carried to the Fort for two days. I often felt strangely when I looked upon

the other babe; my heart yearned upon it, and suckling it frequently, its strength increased, and the following day it was sent out to nurse.

‘ When removed to the Fort, all the nurses being then ready, no one suspected the exchange, but all agreed that Agitha was very like the Earl : her great weakness confirmed the deceit, as she was thought to come prematurely. I am very sure, by their looks, neither Earl Renne nor the Halfladen ever took any delight in her. She being very fond of me, I was willingly detained in her service. When my supposed child, Ella, was brought to see me, no one knows how my heart smote me on beholding so beautiful and fine an infant; but I loved my own more than life, and therefore never could endure the thoughts of seeing her degraded.

The older she grew, the worse she used every body, myself particularly, though I knew the dear soul did love me.

‘ After the Earl’s death she became mighty fond of distilling poisonous herbs, and torturing poor animals very often, to try their effects: we had, thereupon, a great quarrel. Agitha one day beating me severely with a stick, enraged, I then told her I was her mother. She was very inquisitive; but from that time treated me so very kindly, that I fairly own I was fearful she would poison me, and accordingly seldom ate or drank in the Castle. The same kindness was soon after shewn to poor Ella, (after having ever hated and ill treated her); continually was she sent for to dine at the Fort; and when she grew ill Agitha herself constantly

carried her nourishment. Ralph will tell you how often I begged her not to take it; but it was thought all envy, arising from Ella's being in such high favour with Agitha. Two years Ella (I did love her, and I do love Hugo) was declining, and then died.'

Here Cicely again howled, and shewed more strength in her frightful contortions than could be imagined in her reduced state.

'Yes,' continued she, 'and never do I pass that part of the church-yard without seeing her wrapt in her winding sheet, sitting moping upon her green grave; and it was through dread of that I scrambled over the distant stone graves, driven by the cursed boys when I fell, and got my ——— Oh! it creeps—creeps all over me!'

She could say no more; seemed quite

gone; yet survived many hours in great anguish. The pious Monk never left her, but when speech failed, flattered himself from her actions she died penitent. He ever afterwards was drawing parallels between Agitha and Cicely, in the latter's favour, imputing all her crimes to neglect of education; for which he trusted great allowances would be made.

The wretched daughter expired in a condition too dreadful to be thought of, some hours before her wretched mother; dreadfully sensible of her condition to the last moment, and through her fast-closed jaws continually calling upon Ella, or Ellen.

A fresh consultation being held upon these events by Earl Walthelolf, Jonston, the Vavasor, and Oswald, all united in the measure of never suffer-

ing Ella's premature death to transpire, in pity to her husband and parents, and as much as possible to soften the particulars of Cicely and Agitha's dreadful exit.

Orders were given for the interment of both in a neighbouring village, at midnight. In what manner, and when the discovery of Ella's real birth should be made to the greatly impaired and still dispirited Earl, they could not determine, though all thought, if incidentally, and by means of little Hugo, (whom Renne had not seen) it might prove most eligible.

Earl Renne awoke not till a late hour. Calling for Jonston, he said, 'I am more calm, not refreshed, nor is my poor mind much easier, and yet I have seen such a delightful vision!

Ah that I could thus sleep, and dream for ever! Methought the good and injured Sigfrith, from a blaze of glory, smiled, and told me he was indescribably happy, and bid me be happy, while a well known and harmonious voice cried, "and so is Ella! atonement is made for murder: beloved parent, be ye easy, and may your progeny extend to furthest ages!" The latter part of this dream (for such it must be, from its being so vague) is quite incomprehensible; but it is comfortable.'

The Monk assured Renne these were the effects of certain soporiferous drugs they had ventured to mix with his hypocrist; desiring he would arise to real blessings, those of seeing his beloved Halfladen, and others who might prove equally beloved.

The tender anticipatedly meeting of an elderly man with a venerable lady would, if displayed, rather excite the ridicule, than the applause of the sentimental and romantic readers of this age; yet, perhaps, never was meeting more affecting or genuinely affectionate: each apologized to the other for the depredations time and afflictions had made on their persons since their last meeting. The Earl, indeed, was sadly altered, but the remains of delicate beauty were still visible in Editha. She naturally and early began discoursing about Agitha, without a grain of gall; telling the Earl, with much pity, that she had just heard of her being in imminent danger from fits.

‘Name her not, my beloved,’ said Renne, ‘I am informed thou knowest

not half her wickedness; she is and shall be well attended; nor have we ought to repent of, in regard to ever neglecting our wayward child; but never, never will I, nor shall you again behold her: her days shall end in a Convent, and may repentance ensue!’

‘I will not now,’ said the Half-laden, ‘reply to this; let us ever remember she is our child.’

The Dame, in grateful descant, recited the kind attention of her other friends, dwelling long upon the dutiful attendance of the Forester. Beginning to relate and bemoan his loss in Ella, ‘Stop, Editha, (cried the strangely affected Earl) stop, or I shall grow distracted.’

Astonished, yet hoping to console him for the loss of that declared favourite, she continued, ‘Ellen still

lives and is so much what her mother was, that Ella survives in Ellen.'

'Let me retire,' said the weeping Renne, 'and seek composure. Oh Editha! I am not worthy thy tenderness: to thee and Jonston will I unfold every plight of this bad heart, when by self communing I have conquered false shame.'

The Earl retired directly; and was soon seen turning quick, and walking fast in the orchard. The Halfladen, more distressed than ever, related all that had passed to Jonston.

'Be easy, Dame,' replied he, 'I know too well the tenderness of your Earl's mind, and the delicacy of his feeling; some imaginary omission respecting, perchance, his first orders for sending Ella from you, may now dwell upon his weakened imagination: his other

friends and myself will follow him, and make a discovery which will heal every wound. Prepare yourself, Dame, to receive further intelligence, little less joyful than that of your Earl's return. Though Agitha verges on death, you will not die childless. Retire to your devotions, and pray for fortitude to support good, as well as you have endured evil fortune.'

Bowing lowly obedience to the Father, she crossed herself, yet durst not ask a single question.

Calling together all the Earl's friends, the Monk related the surprizing discomposure of Renne. 'I have sent,' said he, 'little Hugo, with a Page, into the orchard, where the Earl is walking; let us all go in Heaven's name, and as circumstances arise, by means of that child, develope the grand dis-

covery. That, or I much mistake, will directly compose the good Earl's susceptible mind.

'The little affectionate Hugo had for some days remained unseparated from his father, and very unwillingly now left him; but being once more got into the air, his liveliness led him to frisk, gambol, and climb up trees, maugre his attendant's remonstrances. The lovely boy had attracted even the melancholy eye of Earl Renne; and he was found by Earl Walthelolf, the Monk, and Vavator, in terrors lest the child should hurt himself through his great activity.

'Whose boy is this?' said Renne.

'Ralph, the Forester's, as he is called,' replied the Vavator. Renne shewed encreased and pointed solicitude for his safety.

‘ It is a wicked world,’ said Walthe-
lof, ‘ that young rogue, I suppose, is
stealing bird’s eggs; a fine occupation
for the undoubted heir to four mighty
earldoms!’ Earl Renne started, and
vainly tried to speak. ‘ Be calm, good
Earl, and mark me; from early youth
I never deceived you. That child, in
right of his father, Ralph, your osten-
sible Forester, but who is in reality
Edmund, Earl of Kent, will inherit the
honours of that house, and also all
those appertaining to Warwick, Chi-
viot, and Mountmorin. He is your
legitimate heir. Ella was your real
daughter. How natural has your fond-
ness for her been! how beautifully
wonderful is your deep regret for her
loss! she was changed soon after birth
by nefarious Cicely for her distorted
Agitha. The holy Jonston will give

you every particular from Cicely's dying confession.' 'And this (said all the persons present) we swear to upon our holy Christian faith.'

Earl Renne appeared entranced and much convulsed, till relieved by a torrent of tears. Prostrate on the ground, with uplifted hands, he long remained mute: at length, violently clasping Jonston's knees, he inarticulately said, 'Then, holy Father, thy son was not in heart an adulterer. My Ella! my own child! how I did love thee! how I will cherish my grief, sanctified by thy merits! Once more—if only once, for a few precious moments I could have seen thee! yet I did hear thee call me parent in vision!—Lay me, Jonston, on that bed again, to court my child's appearance. Oh that I could die directly, and rejoin her!'

Jonston mildly reproved this immoderate agonizing grief, reminding Earl Renne of his beloved Halfladen, of Earl Edmund, Ellen, and Hugo. His docile mind soon stood corrected. Of the Halfladen he uttered the most tender sentiments.

‘Let her,’ said he, ‘be instantly and properly told of Heaven’s mercies to Chiviot, and say that her now self-satisfied husband will visit his best beloved when reduced to composure. Commend me also with true love to my son-in-law, and say the same to him.’

The naming Earl Edmund again recalled the idea of Ella, and again immersed Renne in parental grief.

‘Lead, oh lead me, Jonston, to your cloister! there only can I learn submissive thankfulness.’

‘Stop, first,’ said Walthelolf, ‘and

begin your gratitude to the Most High, in embracing and acknowledging your grandon.'

Hugo was called. Renne, dissolved in tenderness, fell on his neck, repeatedly blessing and calling him *his* child. Hugo clung fast to the Vavasor, frightened, and by no means liking that appellation. 'No, no,' said the sobbing boy, 'I am nobody's child but fader's — I pray ye, let me run back to him; you will kill him, old man, if you take me away.'

The attendants were much affected; the Earl continuing to embrace Hugo, without being able to speak. They comforted the child, by assuring him he should return to his father; whilst Jonston successfully reminded Renne of retiring into the monastery; there, rapt in the highest enthusiasm of de-

votion, unbending his mind most copiously to his candid and comfortable Confessor, sleep lent its conciliatory aid; and Earl Renne arose not till a late hour the following morning.

By his particular request Jonston made an early visit to the patient, yet impatient Halfladen. Her subdued and pious mind received his most pleasant intelligence with wonderful equanimity, and a kind of devout joy: she shed tears for the departed and grievous enemies of her family; uttered not an hard expression, but strongly recommended to the Monk and his society to use every devout invocation for their forgiveness and peace.

‘Father,’ said she, ‘not the blessings I receive in Ellen, Hugo, and my beloved son-in-law, give me more contentment than hearing of my Renne’s

calmness. In every various distress we have shared together (and many has befallen us!); never saw I him, and never consequently felt I myself, till yesterday, so afflicted, so dismayed!

‘He commands me, Dame,’ replied Jonston, ‘to assign to you the cause. A thousand times heretofore, in confession, has he lamented the want of natural affection towards Agitha, and being too fond of an object that had no claim but mere caprice to his love: that object, it now appears, was Ella, (such are the wonderful workings of Nature!) on whom he doated to so great a degree, that his tender mind at times suggested what was really parental love might be of an illicit nature; yet, as he says, upon frequent and strict examination, he found himself not guilty of that depravity; and thence

sought the subterfuge of concealing his fears from me. Upon this account he persuaded you to send her from Chiviot; and upon her return, finding his tender solicitude for her daily encreasing, took the unhappy resolution of spending some time in Normandy. It was, therefore, when you named her death, that he became apparently distracted. He is now happily reconciled to himself, and though in deep, and I fear, lasting affliction, is perfectly and calmly submissive.'

'Wonderful, in truth, are the mind's emotions (replied the Halfladen) respecting natural affection, instinct, or whatever it may be termed. I have heard Renne frequently lament that, upon the first view of the earnestly expected child, he felt a kind of chilling disgust pervade his frame. As to myself, it was long before my dangerous

state of health allowed of my seeing the infant ; and when I did, there was none of that rapturous maternal delight experienced, which I had so fondly anticipated. This I imputed to her premature birth, and my own fright from the monkey, which occasioned, I supposed, evident deformity. I pitied, and was anxious for her safety ; and had Agitha ever treated me with common decency, pity might have engendered regard. I was continually, in my mind's eye, drawing a parallel between her and the modest, affectionate, humble, and grateful Ella ; whom nothing but my Earl's commands would have ever severed from my protection.— But now Ellen, my own Ellen ! ever much beloved, how shall I doat on thee ! counterpart and substitute of my real child, and also on the dear little

playful Hugo! Teach me, Monk, to endure this strange felicity: the female mind wants strength and weight to ballast such happiness. They tell me Ellen, my child, is rather better; reason sometimes faintly glimmers; but they will not let me see her. Tell my son (I fear an equal sufferer!) that his mother, who has not quitted her supposed widowed chamber these five years, will be conveyed to acknowledge her kindness for him, respecting her lost child; and to share his present happiness.'

'Halfladen,' said Jonston, 'thou requirest not the exhortations against tumultuous woe that necessity obliged us to use towards Earl Renne. We are not forbid a kind of chastised grief like thine; it is revelant, and produces submission. Talk and think as little

as may be to both Earls of the past: look forward with grateful hope; and by enduring well (as I have witnessed in past afflictions) deserve a continuance of present mercies.'

This obedient votary of the church, observing the good man's directions, (ever present with herself) the expected interview with Earl Renne passed with much calmness on each side; each fearing to afflict the other by a melancholy retrospect. The wretched Agitha was necessarily brought on the tapis: they could not pretend to any grief on her removal; but shuddered with terror upon account of her salvation.

'Allowances,' said the Earl, 'will be made. I have always been of opinion, that some natures are naturally evil; and that wickedness is often here-

ditary. Hence, I early deduced her bad qualities from the once pure, but now contaminated blood of Beauchamp; and upon that account (and indeed respecting my own fallible heart) have experienced much misery. Learned clerks tell us of an African nation, remarkable for deceit and subterfuge, calling false promises from them Punic faith; nor are their descendants (now forming kingdoms near the Pillars of Hercules) less cruel, or false. The Danes, from their first migration southward, have filled each unhappy country which they have ravaged, with blood, cruelty; rapine; and Agitha's father was a Dane. Could any amendment in her blood be expected from the vagrant, ignorant, yet cunning Cicely, whom I well know continually inflated her daughter's va-

nity, by representing the treasures she would have, and that rank she possessed, through her abominable contrivances? Such unsanctified offerings as these women, would little avail to make atonement for Earl Sigfrith's murder. But to his manes how pure an offering has been made! for in that light I esteem our grievous deprivation, (respecting our Ella) and acknowledging its justice, submit.'

The sight of Earl Edmund entirely destroyed Earl Renne's meditated philosophy: there he indulged a mingled parental with conjugal laments so copiously, that the more firm husband was obliged to become the consoler, by representing the assured beatitude of their Ellen; declaring, if a wish could recall her, he would not form it, lest she should endure, and himself witness

a repetition of her past sufferings. This trying conversation was happily impeded by the entrance of Earl Walthe-
lof.

‘ I go,’ said he, ‘ forthwith, upon hasty summons, to attend the King at Winton. There, Earl Edmund, will I, assisted by the pious Bishop Swithin, implead thy cause, and claim thy honours: they will be confirmed; for since the death of Ethelwolph’s evil advisers, Ceorls, and Aldred, he reverts to piety, and deals out restitution. He was originally designed for the church, and when (as now in this King) the hey-dey of the blood was over, early-imbibed principles recur. He is termed a devotee; yet that has not impaired his hereditary bravery; in a late battle, he has personally attended, and driven the Danes from East Anglia. It was

to congratulate on that event our great Dalzell was leading an embassy into England. How happy does Oswald's assurance make me, that the Hereman and your sweet Ellen are past all danger ! He is still so weak, that the hitherto fortunate secrecy of past events is yet preserved in his chamber ; nor dare we present to him (Earl Renne) your courteous greeting : were the least alterations in his family to be reported, Dalzell would take alarm for the safety of the Forester and his family ; whereas he now acquiesces in their absence, as necessary to preserve them from the fury of that foul being, whom he thinks still commands in Chiviot.'

Walthelolf instantly departed, (with promise of speedy return) followed by the grateful plaudits of Chiviot upon his late friendly and spirited conduct.

Earl Renne commanded dinner to be served in a private room for himself, the Monk, Vavasor, and Oswald; inviting Archibald to attend.

‘Ah! (said Edmund) that Oswald may permit my being brought down after dinner to see Chiviot again become, by its Earl’s return, former Chiviot!’

The good Halfladen, hearing of her Earl’s commands, willing to surprize him, threw off her widow’s attire, and was carried down to meet him, attended by the sweetest little ‘Squire! It was Hugo; he was attired, from the wardrobe, by old Joyce and the maidens, in a newly-fabricated and splendid doublet, mantle, and feathered bonnet. Their entrée almost overcame the Earl’s spirits. Placing himself between them at table, he cried, ‘Ah! who

would have thought a recently forlorn and dungeoned wretch could ever again experience feelings so rapturous !'

It was with great difficulty Archibald's modesty could be prevailed upon to sit in *such* company, as he termed it. Happiness and joy were words continually repeated.

'I am not happy at all,' said Hugo, with tears in his eyes ; 'I pray ye, let me go to fader, and put on my old jerkin ?'

'All in good time,' says Oswald ; 'fader is coming here.'

'Then I will stay,' said the boy. 'Edric tells me, Vavasor, that I am a great child, and therefore must wear these stiff ugly clothes. Pray am I a Vavasor ?'

‘Should you not like to be so?’ said Earl Renne.

‘No, I had rather be a soldier-boy, and have a great horse, and a long sword, like the poor Thane.’

‘And so thou shalt, my child,’ replied the doating grandsire.

‘Not *quite* your child neither,’ replied Hugo; ‘but I am *quite* fader’s boy.’

Much affected, the Earl thus continued: ‘There, my Editha spoke in that boy the mighty spirit of Warwick, and of Kent’s warlike house! Beauchamp once had spirit, but the black extinguisher, Guilt, has, I fear, obscured its rays: may it re illumine in this sapling!’

Earl Edmund being conveyed upon a couch among his friends, augmented

their felicity. He was still very lame; but hoped when so far liberated, he might have been suffered to visit Ellen. The Leech would not consent, promising Hugo should see her to-morrow; and by that means judgment might be formed how her still wayward mind would support more trying interviews.

Archibald, elated by honours received, and become rather animated in drinking healths to the company, felt his curiosity so forcible, that, with all due deference, he besought Earl Renne to relate the story of his seizure and long imprisonment.

‘Yes,’ said the Halfladen, ‘and I too long, yet dread to hear the particulars: relate them, my Earl; never will my spirits be in better tone to bear the recital.’

Renne thus began: ‘I passed directly

from hence to Roan, where Charles le Chauve was receiving fealty from all those Barons who had territories in that late kingdom of Soissons. I rendered homage as such; and sending for my nephew, Pierre de Beauchamp, from Mountmorin, (which castle I had suffered my late brother, and this his son, to inhabit, well endowed, since the time it became my patrimony) Pierre was well received, and a considerable civil post in Normandy granted to him. At this very time (I blush to own it) he was Captain of a vile banditti, (as his father had been) who were there detained, as seeming guards in my castle: dreadful cruelties they long had exercised in nightly sallies made upon travellers; great treasures were amassed in Mountmorin, now the scene of every infernal vice. Rumour had often sug-

gested unseemly reports; but who durst accuse a powerful and might Beauchamp? and who would even surmize such a fact to its family's superior? When I told Pierre my design of spending some months at Mountmorin, he seemed much embarrassed; but attributed it to the fear that the accommodations were inadequate to me and my suite. I told him I required little; and being going to Farlese, to settle accounts with the Galliardes (a family who had long been our hereditary stewards) I would there remain till my accommodations at Mountmorin were ready; coming from thence at first with only Jaques, my old servant, and leaving the rest at Farlese till he was ready to receive them. Pierre appeared much gratified by this offer; and said, when

my apartment was ready he would have the honour of being my escort.'

'When he arrived at Galliarde's for this purpose, he contrived to loiter away time till very far in the day; and when we mounted our horses he talked incessantly; I suppose to beguile me as to the length of time we were riding only four leagues. I had taken the old and well known road, but he soon diverged from it into a nearer way, as he said, through the forest. Complaining of its not being so, and the evening growing dusky, he cursed himself for having lost his way. Riding close behind me, in a very narrow road, he exclaimed, 'Now, Earl, you may see the turret-light of Mountmorin: (a light ordained to be used every night as a kind of pharos to befriend

travellers through my brown forests). Standing up in my stirrups to behold it, I was suddenly stricken over my horse's head, and surrounded by a desperate band. I heard the clashing of swords, the cries of poor Jaques, and the groans of horses. I was stript, bound, gagged; and being, I suppose, almost smothered in a mantle, became insensible.

' When recovered, I found myself on a small bed, in a vaulted room; a lamp, wine, water, and manchets placed by me. It was a long and dismal subterraneous room, with an aperture for air near the ceiling. Coffers and trunks were loaded upon each other: a massy iron door terminated a long passage, and a fire-place was made in the room.

' Thrice every successive day an el-

derly man attended me with every comfortable refreshment, seemingly solicitous for my proper accommodation. He seldom replied to my questions; but seeing me patient, and seemingly satisfied, grew kind, and not so silent: he told me, I was a state prisoner; that he greatly detested his office, but were he to assist me in escaping, a dreadful death would await us both; that my only chance was from the death of my superior keeper, who lived a very debauched life.

‘ In this abode I spent five years, incessantly thinking of Editha and one more, and (esteeming it penance for my father’s sins and my own) was wonderfully supported. I often thought I was at Mountmorin, from the continual roaring of a rushing Alpine kind of torrent, whose sound I well remem-

bered. This thought was confirmed by an old porringer ; which, once being brought with my morning porridge, I knew, by a particular mark I had made in it when a child. My attendant supplied me with an hour-glass ; and, after many entreaties, brought me a missal, a book of legends, and, to my infinite joy, a fair copy of the Evangelists : all, I doubt not, had been plundered from ecclesiastic travellers ; for Mountmorin never sought any information from literature. The man also furnished me with a little kitten. You would be surprized to be told how any thing that had life, and every day grew so companionably fond of me, added to, or rather created me amusement.'

Little Hugo could not contain himself. Although he had crept close to

his father, and seemingly playing with his hand, not a word had escaped him.

“ And where (said the boy) is poor little puss? Have the bandy killed her?”

“ No, my boy, (resumed the Earl, delighted with Hugo’s evident sensibility) no: she is left at Monsieur Galliarde’s, and he will soon bring her to Chiviot. I had often latterly observed that my jailor had taken too much liquor; and, truly concerned, reproved him for drinking. He said, he drank to drown the sorrow my confinement occasioned him. One evening he appeared particularly inebriated; and, by way of apology, said, they had all been at a neighbouring fair, and that himself was the most sober of all the family. Walking soon after, as usual, to the extent of my prison, I perceived

the iron door was not closed; it strangely fluttered me. Hope, fear, and a desire of being ascertained where I was, with a strong longing to breathe fresh air, raised a kind of vertigo in my mind: the latter prevailed; I peeped out: the moon shone brightly, and showed I was enclosed in the inner quadrangle of Mountmorin. Hope of escape I had none. All was hush: it was midnight. Why, said I, why venture I not up the winding stair-case, into the pharos turret, and see if it really is still a pharos, it being detached from all the apartments, and never used. I did venture. Lifting up the arras hangings, I crept in. The light blazed as usual. I was strongly affected; and the air, so long estranged to me, had obstructed my breath. Down I sunk on an old chair; and, I suppose, sighed,

or deeply groaned. Something moved: I started, on seeing a bed placed in one corner, and a man seemingly much agitated, sitting in it upright, with clasped hands and elevated eyes. Now, thought I, my poor jailor and myself will experience cruel deaths. In names the most sacred, the man invoked me to say who and what I was? Thinking he mistook me for a ghost, I endeavoured to appear such; waving my hand, and stiffly stalking to the door.

“Stop, stop,” cried the person: “thou wert or art my honoured Lord of Mountmorin.”

‘I stopped: he rushed from bed, and directly I was embraced by my old and faithful vassal, Galliarde. Our meeting beggars description—joy on my side, horror on his, prevailed. He told me, that arriving late over night, and find-

ing the house full of rioters, a servant had placed a bed for him in that room; for he often attended the diabolic Pierre on business. He became half frantic on hearing my sad tale, and saw the necessity of my direct return to my prison.

“ At the peril of my life (said Galliarde) I will deliver, and revenge you. I will appeal to the fountain of justice—to our righteous King, and you shall be liberated with an high and vigorous hand: it will require time. Think not I neglect you, if so it prove.”

‘ I then commanded him, if the Castle was stormed, not premeditatedly to kill its usurper, and to treat my keeper leniently. Again we embraced, and parted.

‘ Silently I closed the spring-lock of my prison, and that being found so by

my keeper, and myself apparently sleeping in the morning, no suspicion on his part took place. I watched every turn of my hour-glass, through each day (I trust not impatiently) for near three weeks. About day-break, one morning, I started from my slumbers. Surely (said I) the door-grates unusually! My sensations were strangely excited. I had no power to move. At length, honest Galliarde's voice vibrated on my ear.

“ Rise, rise, (said he) my Lord of Mountmorin, and re-possess your Castle: your enemies are all secured.”

Many officers (several of them old friends) embraced me. Not a syllable was uttered: they were much affected on seeing my long beard, ghastly looks, and tattered appearance; a kind of blanket composing my upper habili-

ment. Galliarde, upon pretence of business at midnight, had been admitted within the barbican: the ambush'd troops (kindly sent from the King's body guards) rushed in. Few, and fearful, were the repulses. Some blood was shed; but the majority of the banditti sought safety in flight. Their guilty, and therefore pusillanimous, leader, vainly barricadoed himself within a strong room; he was taken, and I was obliged to exert my authority in sparing his life. I sent him my forgiveness; but would not see him. He was confined to my prison, till removed by the royal mandate into the dungeon at Roan. A pious monk there daily attends him: may he thereby be rendered meet to embrace an holy order, as my kind friend and jailor, at his own request, has

done! Most of the banditti were taken, and have suffered death, notwithstanding my earnest desire to save those wretched agents. It seems, upon my capture, that they directly killed poor Jaques, and both our horses; hiding the corpse of the former, particularly mangled in the face, and clad in my stript-off habiliments. Pierre took care not to have the corpse found, till reduced to so putrid a state, that my servants (sent for from Farlese to attend the obsequies) could not possibly know it was not their master.

‘Robbery, murder, and escape, were attributed by Pierre to Jaques. Good man, he is rewarded! He would, I well know, have voluntarily died to save me. I removed as soon as possible to my friend Galliarde’s; staying there only time sufficient to recruit

my spirits, and improve my personal appearance.

‘ Wishing, my Halfaden, to take every guarded step not to return to you, unnoticed, I passed directly to our hundredary town, meaning there to send for the Vavasor. You know the rest. Afflicted I am, thus to afflict my kind and too attentive hearers.’ And that being eminently perceivable in all, the Vavasor, willing to point the company’s attention to more cheerful objects, called upon old Archibald to fulfil his promise of relating the adventures of Dalzell.

‘ I believe I may venture, (said the old man, his eyes glistening with pleasure) for Gregory is never tired with reading, or my Thane with hearing. Methinks it is very like old Scotland: there we have bards and story-tellers,

who come every day, after dinner, into our great halls.* I hope, though, never to hear such a story from them as that of your's, Earl Renne.—To begin then:——

‘ My Thane is son of Gilchrist, a secondary family of that clan in Murray. His father still is stout and brave, as demonstrated in many an action against the Picts. *Jemmy* (my master) from birth was educated as hardy Highlanders ought to be. He became so wonderfully active and agile, that he was early called the climber; for, at ten years old, he would scramble up rocks and mountains, like a goat; and afterwards contriving to place iron spikes

* This custom of story-telling in great baronial halls continued till very late in the feudal times: the Trombadours, or Provincial Poets, in the days of Chivalry, were of this order, and greatly refined our language and softened our manners.

upon his brogues, he would wonderfully ascend the highest towers ; inso-much, that old Gilchrist used to say, he would carry him to English fairs, among tumblers and merry-makers, to get money by him. At seventeen, to the wars he would go ; and there were plenty, between our King Alpin and Brutus, the Pictish King. In a mighty battle the good Alpin was taken prisoner, put to a cruel death, and his corpse gibbeted on one of their highest forts for they are as cruel as the Danes. Our army were in view ; but, from the deep foss, the garrison was deemed impregnable ; and in truth, Kenneth (always a fond and good son) was so afflicted at the exhibition of his dead parent, that he was quite non-plussed. However, mighty rewards were offered for the recovery of the old

King's body, that, holy rites being observed over it, his spirit might rest in peace.*

‘ Macrae, Thane of Dumbritton, (son of King Alpin's late great counsellor and favourite) was at that time much esteemed by Kenneth, though in general rated as a vain braggart, and a deceitful, proud man. He vauntingly offered, with a large guard, to recover Alpin's corpse; and, alas! many a brave lad fell in the unavailing enterprise.

‘ Kenneth, more dispirited than ever, cried, “ No one now will *dare*.”

“ I DARE,” said a noble looking stripling: it was our *Jemmy*. The more

* The inhuming of the dead in holy ground was esteemed for many ages indispensable for promoting the rest of the soul. This custom probably originated from early Greece.

the arduous task was reprobated as impossible to be atchieved by such a youth; the more solicitous he became to undertake it. All assistance was offered. "No," replied he, "I have well investigated the foss, the walls, the ramparts; two of my comrades will wait on this side the foss, to assist in drawing up the body, if Saint Andrew, Saint Columba, and holy Saint Bridget strengthen my arm in hewing it down, which I trust they will do."

'Accordingly, at midnight, (illuminated by a bright moon) Jemmie, alone, descended the foss, swam over the deep moat, with his usual dexterity scaled the rock, and putting on his spikes, mounted the Tower. There, with a sharp Lochaber-axe, of some length and great keenness, cutting the rope on which the body was suspend-

ed, down it fell on some moss (to prevent noise) placed under the Tower: then fastening it to a long and hooked stick, he drew it down to the water; and swimming over, dragged the corpse after him to the place where his companions were in readiness to assist in drawing it up on the opposite rock.

‘ King Kenneth received the precious yet horrid remains with true filial piety; and the next day sent it forward, (myself attending) to be interred at Icolmkill, or Iona, vowing there to build an holy church, and make it the cemetery of all the Alpi-niade.

‘ Confused and enraged, Brutus next morning quitted the fortress; and with mighty power offered us battle. Jemmie was among the foremost to repel the Pictish army; and thereby added to his

glory. The Picts were routed, Brutus slain, and great carnage ensued. The battle over, at the head of the troops Jemmie was summoned by Kenneth to name his reward. The soldiers' loud acclaims testified his merit.

"Promote me, great King," said he, "in your army, not beyond my years, or humble station in life; and when I am by further services authorized to wear an Hereman's accoutrements, suffer me to bear on my shield the figure of the rescued King Alpine."

"Wear it from this moment, (replied the King) for Thane of Lanark I appoint thee: be thy motto, I DARE, and DALZELL, (which in Galic signifies these words) thine and thy family's name."

From that time, during the last ten years, Dalzell attaining the highest

command, is confessed by all Scotland to be the primary cause and chief executive power in the entire demolition of even the Pictish name in Scotland; thereby uniting and conquering Caledonia, from Caithness to the Roman Wall, the barrier between England and Scotland. He never has quitted Kenneth, but when sent by him with rich offerings to the holy sepulchre, in Palestine. Pope Leo IVth commanded his return through Rome, where every apostolic honour, with magnificent gifts, were heaped upon him.

False Macrae concealed the ranklings of envy under the specious appearance of the most sincere friendship. He seldom attended the King but in times of celebrity, during frequent relaxations from war. It was then that, tempting Dalzell to mix in a fa-

vourite play of our people, which requires great exertion of strength, he contrived to stab him. He knew it was his custom, when fatigued, to sleep, flat on his face upon the ground; and Dalzell, directly after the game was over, doing so, Macrae sent off the attendants, and so desperately performed his black design, that a part of the dirk was left in the wound. Being, we suppose, hurried, he left behind one gauntlet; which I, imprudently, swore (before many persons) was his; having often armed him, with many other young men, in my master's tent. My assertion reaching the assassin's ears, he made off directly; nor could he be found, notwithstanding the great rewards offered for his apprehension. My Thane was discovered weltering in his blood. King Kenneth (half dis-

tracted) sending to Dalzell a famous French Leech then in his court, he was quickly healed, superficially, as since appears. His great spirit defying danger, (suggested by many friends) to England he would go with an embassy, meaning to diverge to Eboracum, unattended in his way. The rest is known. To the care of Ellen, Earl Edmund, and to the Halfladen's hospitality (and also to Oswald's great skill) he owes his life. On our way hither, an Highlander avowed having seen Macrae peep over the battlements of Pepperden, as you know, (about twenty miles from hence) inhabited by a desperate freebooter and outlaw, called Johnny a-booty. There, I conclude, he was sheltered; and from thence wished to realize Agitha's reputed wealth.'

Archibald bowing low, retired, with the united praises of his audience. Elated with their plaudits, with having had an opportunity of displaying his Thane's greatness, and with drinking to each attentive hearer a full gobletted health, he retired to Dalzell's apartment. So unusual an absence had created surprize, but the good-natured Thane hoped such relaxation would relieve his tried attendant.

Soon perceiving his elevated spirits, and well knowing his unretentive faculty, Dalzell thought this was his time to develope a certain air of mystery he had long descried in his attendants. Ellen was the first object of the sick man's enquiry.

Archibald answered, Oh mighty well, and more charming than ever!

'Agitha?' said the Thane.

‘Oh! you will never see her again—no, nor Macrae—Great alterations here! Earl Renne is reported to be returned.’

‘Torture me not,’ said Dalzell—
‘has Macrae been here?—has he carried off Ellen?’

‘No, no! both she and her father are safe enough in this Castle.’

‘In this Castle? and Agitha gone!—They not repeating their visits to me—something very fatal has happened, which is secreted from wretched Dalzell!’

Archibald perceiving his error, dealt in vain palliatives. The consequence to the Thane was a wretched restless feverish night, which so greatly alarmed Archibald, that at day’s dawn he called Jonston and Oswald, contritely confessing his late imprudent loquacity.

These good and mild men, perceiving poor Archibald's tender concern, told him it was all for the best; and that his Thane's being greatly amended in health, authorized their telling him the present delectable situation of the Chiviot family. Jonston undertook the office; and by slightly passing certain agonizing scenes, and glossing over the sufferings of those whom Dalzell was most attached to, he received the intelligence with composure, replying,

' Ah! that Earl Edmund's family should have been so chastized for their goodness to me! You, very good men, will, I well know, tell truth; but often not *all* the truth: let me see Hugo, and then I shall be quite satisfied.'

The boy (having been well lectured) joyfully embraced the summons. Jumping upon the bed, he half smothered

the Thane with endearments; and so satisfactory were his replies, that Daltzell expressed great contentment. 'Oswald (said Hugo) promises to carry me to see Ellen this morning; and I will be sure to come and tell you all about her: Edric has led me every day to see Selim, and he is very well. Fader comes down in the hall, and would have come here, but Oswald would not let him.'

The Thane smiled with delight on the boy; whispering him not to forget to give his love to Ellen, whom he had continually thought of. In a whisper, returned Hugo, 'I will; but I must whisper her too, or old Joyce and Dame Enna will think you are her sweetheart, and they hate sweethearts as bad as fader.'

Ellen had for some days past slowly

mended: her fever was subdued; but that terror which for some time had deprived her of all sense, and afterwards resolved into a frightful torpor, frequently returned; shewing itself by starting and shrieking. Yet at times she was so apparently reasonable, that her friends had ventured to tell her the present state of the family; but nothing could quite convince her that her father, the Halfladen, and Thane, had not been murdered; and every circumstance that only glanced at Agitha, threw her into distortions. Hence it was that Hugo was brought to satisfy her on those points. Upon his entrance, she clung so fast to him, shrieking, that the child was alarmed. A torrent of tears (the first she had shed) greatly relieved her: she sunk back, dozing in her chair, grasping fast Hugo's little hand,

while with the other, held up, he only cried *bush!* and in this posture remained a fixture near an hour.

Awaking perfectly tranquil, and kissing her brother most tenderly, she said, 'Tell me truth, dearest boy, of fader, Halfladen, and Thane.'

'Fader's legs,' replied Hugo, 'were hurt in that place, but he now hops down on a stick, and would have come with me, but Oswald said *no*: but if you don't flurry yourself at seeing me, he will be sure to come by and bye. The Halfladen is very well, and will come too. The Thane is a great deal better: he is still in the hall-chamber; for the Ethling's hatred of him turned to love.'

That unfortunate name brought on Ellen's fits. When recovered, said Hugo, 'You need not be afraid of her;

she is dead, and buried near Chastleon church. Edric saw her put in a deep pit-hole, by torch-light.'

Ellen became very tremulous; but with striking solemnity replied: 'And where then is she gone?—I forgive her—poor sad Ethling!—Are you sure this is true?'

'Yes, indeed it is: she never was an Ethling—dear mammy was the true Ethling; and now you are an Ethling; and Edric says I am Athling, (don't you see my fine doublet?) Athling of a many fine places. The Halfladen does nothing all day but love me, and calls me *her* child; and so does Earl Renne; for he is alive, and come back here, and found out who we were. I did not much like him at first; but when the poor old man told us how he had been shut up in a cave for five

years, it made me love him dearly : and there, Ellen, he had no company but a little puss : she is to be brought here. Sha'n't we love her and take care of her, Sissy ?

The attendants thinking Hugo's visit had been sufficiently long, desired him to retire : when, as if going to embrace Ellen, he threw his arms round her neck, and whispered, 'The Thane bid me carry his love to you, and say he thinks of nobody else.'

Ellen faintly smiled; and little Hugo was very reluctantly dismissed.

In the evening the fond father and doating grandmother were admitted to visit Ellen; both (having long practised self-government) reigned in the too immoderate flowings of affection, and therefore Ellen was perfectly composed. It was not so in the interview (so

vehemently desired by each) between Earl Renne and Ellen: she had remembered his notice of her in childhood, and ever was uncommonly attached to him; and how was that attachment encreased by the knowledge of his sufferings! and that in him she should receive her beloved mother's father! He, on his part, had been endeavouring to call up all his philosophy, and to moderate his reigning passion, parental love of Ella, and of her children. The attendants knew not that she could walk; but no sooner did the Earl appear, than with a look of the highest reverence and composed joy, she threw herself before him, muttering the word *blessing*. He had been told of Ella's resemblance to her mother; but it was so very striking, that

every other thought became absorbed in that idea.

‘It is my Ella, my own Ella! my child!’ and instantly a fainting fit ensued. Nor was she in a much better condition: both were separated; both were sadly hurt by the interview. The Earl’s penitence and shame, for having given way to such vehemence, were great; far greater was his restless desire of again seeing Ellen. Jonston (who ever had a great ascendancy over the Earl’s passions) at length acceded to his petition, after repeated exhortations for his encouraging self-command. Attending in the interview, and keeping his eye sternly fixed upon Renne, Jonston prevented every rising of intemperate affection; and nothing was perceivable but tenderness on the

parent's, and the most respectful attachment, on the child's part. After this placidity of meeting, Earl Renne was continually with Ellen; whilst she was, or appeared, ever cheerful in his company.

Dalzell received the Earl and Halfladen with all possible deference and gratitude, respecting their rank, and as the parents of Ellen. All embargoes thus removed, reserve and fear banished, the late cruelly divided and miserable family of Chiviot now met continually, with a degree of joy, thankfulness, and reliance, that cannot be pourtrayed.

The seeing Ellen was Dalzell's primary and everlasting topic; but though far advanced towards convalescence, the quitting his chamber still appeared a distant object. It might be perceived

that Ellen, in return, wished to see him; but whenever the changing her room for a more airy apartment (much wished for by Oswald) was mentioned, the fantastic terrors returned forcibly; supposed to arise from her horror of seeing the Bats' Tower, which fronted the stair-case she must descend. At length a successful bait was laid; the Thane's recovery was said to be retarded, because he was convinced that Ellen, by refraining from visiting him, had taken an aversion to his company.

‘No,’ she said, ‘that I have not: blind my eyes, and lead me down.’ When passing through the lobbies leading to the Thane's apartment her malady returned: she shrieked, and was much agitated. Dalzell (little less so) being informed she would soon be calm, and the door purposely left open,

he cried, 'Is my lovely Ellen, the preserver of my life, my kind nurse, coming? Then perchance she is not very angry with me.'

Ellen had risen from her seat at the sound of his voice, holding up her finger, in token of silence; when, rushing into the room, she cried, "I am not indeed angry with you at all! Poor Thane! how white you look!" Then clinging to Earl Renne as if in terror, yet wishing to correct it, and desiring him to leave the room, (as she had something to tell the Thane he must not hear) the fond parent smiled, and obeyed.

'No, no, (said Ellen) poor dear old man, you must not hear about dungeons and ghosts! it will hurt him, you know, Thane: but, oh! I will, I will tell you;—you will hear me; nobody

else will let me talk about it—no, not fader. One that is gone—(gone, who knows where?) shut me up in the Bats' Tower; and there they came flapping, and flapping all round me; and a great raven did nothing but croak and scream; and the murderer's ghost, with a face much whiter than your's, ran his frightful bald head at me; it had no eyes, but it grinned, and grinned, and champ'd its frightful yellow teeth full in my face—and—'

'Sweet girl, (said the Thane) if thou art angry, and wishest to kill me, go on.'

'No, I do'n't wish any thing but to do thee good. I will never tell you again. You believe me?'

'Assuredly.'

'Well, then, I am so easy! and we will try to forget it. Had you been

well and strong enough to draw out broadino, would you have let her serve me so? No! that you would not!’

‘No, Ellen: no one henceforward shall hurt or frighten you, nor put such strange things in your head. I look upon it you dreamed about these appearances, over and over again, while you were sick.’

‘Yes, I did; and I can tell you a great deal more, and how——’

‘No, Ellen; not a word more, it may set me in a tremble, and my wound may bleed: not that, when well, one minds silly dreams: you will not mind them when quite recovered. Let us talk of nothing but pleasant things——of your being now a fine young dame, of your father being a great Earl, and of our going (for I hope to go with you) to Warwick; and we

will carry all the friends we love with us, and leave some one to take care of the poor at Chiviot. Sha'n't you like this ?'

' Mightily !'

' And when any thing discomposes you, be sure to come and tell me directly—every thing, except, you know, about dreams: they vex and hurt me.'

' Well! and so I will: and now I feel quite light. Thane, I like you vastly.' Then, natural modesty recurring, in fearing she had transgressed in point of delicacy, her fine Magdalen pale face was beautifully suffused with a faint blush. ' I mean (continued she) I do like your company so well, because I can tell you all that hurts me.'

With similar discourse like this El-

len continued to delight Dalzell, till superior powers thought proper to end the conference.

The Thane (having been desired so to do) requested Ellen to remove into a room on that side of the house, and then she could nurse him; for none nursed so well, and she might go out into the air.

Her's was a ready assent——‘ and then (said she) I sha’n’t see the Bats’ Tower.’

‘ Not a word of that, Ellen,’ said Dalzell.

Being permitted to follow this plan, she rapidly recovered. Though the Earls had long since joyfully fixed with Dalzell the plan of his future marriage with Ellen, love was an interdicted subject, and the Thane had too much honour and regard to Ellen, in her

weakened state, ever to lead to that kind of conversation. Thus, all embargoes and restraints (save in this article) being removed, the family were continually together; and, from a most afflicted and wretched society, were now become superlatively happy.

Early one morning the household were roused by the watchman's announcing that the rising sun struck forcibly on a body of spear-men, marching upon Chiviot. Earl Renne sounded his horn; the retainers assembled: himself armed at all points, (every officer being stationed at his proper post) rested on his lance at the portal; for so ferocious were the times, that such precautions were most necessary, especially on the borders, ever the scenes of robbery, rapine, and ruin. The messenger who had been sent into

Scotland, from the farther side of the foss proclaimed the troops to be expected were sent to convey Macrae to Stirling; that they were ordered not to halt, but convey him, through the postern directly to the next town. Two warriors, sent by Kenneth, were following, with a small train, to visit the great Dalzell. Macrae had been most leniently treated; his sullenness was invincible: he obeyed the summons with an haughty air, but, when chained upon a horse, broke out into horrid invectives respecting the house of Chiviot, and in dreadful imprecations against the life of Dalzell. The culprit was just removed, when the two Scotch warriors were introduced, and most courteously greeted by Earl Renne. All threw up their beavers,

and swords were exchanged,* in token of amity. The Earl told them, that his guest was not stirring. They wished to speak in private with his old attendant. Archibald's curiosity frustrated this request ; for, hearing what was passing, he contrived just then to cross the hall. Upon viewing the taller stranger, he started, was instantly on his knees, and murmured something like *Royal*.

‘ Hush ! (said the warrior) know ye not the Thane of Dunsina ne ?

I know no such Thane : I see there (pointing to the other warrior) the Thane of Forres ; but I know how to hold my tongue.’

* Changing of swords, during the whole of feudal times, was constantly observed on these occasions ; probably to convince each other that their swords were not impregnated with poison ; too common an occurrence !

Earl Renne, advancing, would have, if allowed, bent his knee.

‘ Pardon my ignorance, Sire, (said he) I well know the condescending favour that the great Kenneth bestows on Dalzell, and do conjecture that thus, in all humility, I bid welcome to the mighty King of Scotland within Chiviot’s Fort.’

‘ And so it is, my good Earl, (replied the stranger); if Kenneth appears thus unattended before thee, it arises not from lack of honouring thee; but knowing the disturbed state of Chiviot’s house, I wished to spare thee the troublesome pageantry of court etiquette. I come to congratulate thy return, and to see my friend, the rescuer of my father’s corpse, the deliverer of Scotland; and, Earl, if thou wilt permit me here to remain a pri-

vate man, known only as Dunsinane, thou shalt thereby confer on me a mighty obligation.'

'You command, Prince, in Chiviot,' replied Earl Renne. And so it was. By which forbearance of all etiquette the King was highly gratified, and, through his great affability and cheerfulness, rendered the invalid and all the family infinite service, by calling off their attention from past scenes. The gentle Halfladen, by Kenneth's particular desire, each day did the honours of her table; while little Hugo (whom the King greatly indulged) chattered at her side. As Ellen could refuse no request of Dalzell's, she also (with infinite caution) was introduced, and received the royal plaudits with true modest dignity.

'It is well (said Kenneth, in his

broad Scotch dialect) that I am mated with my old Madge, (for so he called his beautiful Queen) or I should have measured swords with thee, Dalzell, for this bonny lassie."

'Dalzell assures me,' replied Ellen, 'he has done with fighting.'

'Aye!' said Hugo—'but I warrant he will fight again and again. I can tell you, Dunsinane, if you fight with him, you must get a great long sword, or broadino will kill you. I wish I was big enough to draw him out of his scabbard.'

The day before Kenneth's departure (just after dinner) arrived Earl Walthelolf, attended by two heralds: entering the hall, he bid them do their duty.

'I come (said the foremost) from King Ethelwolph, Monarch of all Eng-

land, to summon thee, Earl Renne, to pay fealty to him, for thy Earldom of Warwick, at Coventry; where he holds his plenary court the ensuing tide.'

' And I (said the second messenger) alike warn thee to the same place, Edmund, Earl of Kent; there to receive restored honours of Kent, and to do homage accordingly.'

This was cause of increased felicity to all present. The evening was convivially spent. Earl Renne, easily fatigued with noise, after a five year's seclusion, retiring early, the residue removed to Dalzell's chamber, there to impart and receive augmented cheerfulness, in witnessing his improving state of health. Earl Walthelolf, in a free, but impetuous manner, entirely his own, rather abruptly requested the Earl of Kent to relate the particular mode by which he realized and secured

the fair Ella from the vindictive rage and indefatigable pursuit of an adulterous King and a dissolute Minister.

The much affected mourner replied: 'It is an arduous, yet proper task to be fulfilled:—grant me a little scope to acquire self command. I must be concise; and, ah! my friends, allow for my weakness: my Ella's merit, had you known her, would sanctify my depression for her loss, even in the eyes of those philosophers, whom, I think, the Monks call Stoics.'

'Take your time,' replied Walthe-
lof: 'I made my first application in your favour, at Winchester, to Bishop Swithin. The holy man appeared intranced with joy: he told me, that the King, since the death of Ceorls, was become almost a Confessor, from his pious and blameless life; and that the

restoration of family rights to the injured Earl Edmund would be a cordial to his entendered mind; having, by great rewards, long sought the Earl's return, to inherit his large patrimonial domain.'

'And (replied Edmund) may my little Hugo prove a worthy steward of Heaven's and the King's bounty!—may he prove a faithful soldier and servant of the former, a loyal and valiant vassal to the latter! Long shall I not be separated from my Ella! Affliction has anticipated this puling weakness, and brought upon me early debilitated old age. In youth (think me not a braggart, my friends) Edmund knew not depression of spirit. In beauty my Ella was unrivalled; yet beauty to me was her least attraction: she had such a dignity of soul! Not even the great British Queen Boadicea possessed

more stability of mind; nor the unfortunate wife of our late King Edwy more affectionate softness of heart, or more feminine graces.

‘ In the courtly train of Earl Athelstan and Eltrude I first saw Ella, and seeing her, amid the demoiselles ever attendant on Eltrude, (kept, as reported, by that Dame to attract into her circle the gay young men who composed Ethelwolph’s Court) I became her everlasting adorer. With that true sense of honour inherent in her every action, she repeatedly refused my urgent offers of marriage; relating her supposed mean birth; which must, by a union with her, in her opinion, ever sully a noble house: nor would all my arguments relative to being only a Cadet of the house of Kent (having two elder brothers and two nephews then living)

in the least soften the rectitude, or, as I then esteemed it, the rigour of her refusal; and yet I was well assured she loved me. Ella, though so low in rank, was the Cynosure of Ethelwolph's Court: the King and Ceorls publicly avowed her fascinating influence; whilst this humble villein maid, by a certain innate dignity, kept each of those daring and powerful suitors at an equal distance with the merest gad fly courtier. No court was ever more licentious than that of England, in the early reign of Ethelwolph. I had a comrade, (a man of Kent) dear to me as my soul: he was my sworn-brother, * and being in the

* *Sworn-brothers* were the nearest of ties, in these and after ages. Youth was educated from home, often in abbies; and there it was a custom for them to select some chosen friend; and they often shared each other's fortune, preferably to kindred.

household and confidence of Ceorls, told me, that a great carousal was ordered to be held on Saint Catherine's Hill; (for the Court was then at Winchester) the evening to be crowned with music, illumination, and mummeries; and that during the noise and licentious freedom of the latter sport, Ella was devoted to seizure; and to be conveyed into an impregnable castle in Mercia; there, the decreed victim of the lawless Ethelwolp's passion; upon his promise, that when satiated with her beauty, she should become the consigned property of the still more infamous Ceorls.

‘ These atrocities, my friends, you, alas ! know to be so frequent, that astonishment arising from the deepest villainy in this age is deadened by the continual infraction of every law, hu-

man and divine. My friend easily convinced me that Ella's safety could only be ensured by flight; pledging her safety, by engaging, or rather purchasing a fishing-boat, and fisherman's accoutrements, at a neighbouring small village on the river's beach, which would convey us to the Isle of Wight; where, amid its intangled forests, we might secrete ourselves till the heat of pursuit was over, and we were at liberty to cross the sea into Soissons, for there I had many powerful connections.

What contending passions did I not behold in my Ella's fine countenance, on being informed of the embryo design of Ethelwolp! Fear, horror, despair, and above all, the dread of entangling me in her ruin! Nor should I ever have prevailed upon her to accept my urgent offers of at-

tending her flight, had I not, by the most solemn vows, declared that if refused, I would instantly, and publicly, avow the King's infamous design to holy Bishop Swithin. Convinced mine and my friend's death would be inevitable, from the despotism and cruelty of the King and the General, she at length reluctantly assented, upon my promise of placing her in a French convent, and that I would not return into England till, by my family's interference, the King's pardon might be obtained. Providence befriended her innocence and virtue. We escaped, under the semblance of fishermen, and landing on the Isle of Wight, turned our boat adrift. I knew well the intricacies of the adjacent forests; and leading her towards a cave, (where, in sporting seasons, we used to leave our

bows and arrows) passing through a small village at its extremities, we heard groans, bespeaking distress, accompanied with shrill notes of joy.

‘ Leaving Ella behind some thick bushes, I soon perceived a miserable old hag thrown on the ground, and enduring severe persecution from several little boys. I drove them off, with threats and some effective blows. Raising the old beldam from the ground, she besought Heaven to reward me, whose servant she called herself; being no witch, though esteemed such by the wicked children.

“ Can I, poor wretch as I am, serve you ?” said the woman.

‘ Yes,’ replied I, ‘ if you can shelter me, and my younger brother, for one night, in your cot. We are pursued by wicked enemies, and shall meet cruel

death from the Danes. The very sound of *Dane* ever creates in every unhardened breast the chill of horror.

“ I cannot,” replied the woman, “ take you both to my sad abode, for I live with wicked people; but I will shew you where Heaven’s saint, holy Randolph the Hermit, inhabits a large cave; and he will receive you for your goodness to me, (he is my only friend) and for the love of Heaven and charity.”

‘ We followed our new friend, listening to the praises of Randolph. His name and reputed virtues were familiar to me; for in our frequent lawless huntings in the Isle of Wight, Ethelwolph had ever dehorted his train from intrusion on the kind of sanctimonial ground which environed Randolph’s abode, as being the abode of true pie-

ty; for though the King, by the influence of bad company and strong passions, had become very dissolute, yet the sentiments of religion, early imbibed, (and therefore indelibly fixed on his mind) would often obtrusively recur. The Hermit received us with all the simplicity of real benevolence and unostentatious charity.

“Here,” said he, “my children, you are safe: my cave has ever remained unviolated, whilst holy shrines, and elaborately fine edifices dedicated to Heaven, have felt the iron hand of avaricious depravity.”

“I could not conceal from such a man the entire truth of our situation.

“I abhor every untruth, even glossing mental reservation, (said Randolph) and therefore do most solemnly vow here to secrete and protect chil-

dren of truth, amid the labyrinths of my far extending cave, till all danger of pursuit subsides."

• With this really divine man we abode (greatly to our edification) for near five months. Early and strongly, in our residence with him, he urged Ella to consent to our union; thinking if we were discovered, the acknowledged wife would be less an object of seizure than the unprotected maiden. Randolph had a brother, (his counterpart in piety) who was father in an holy cloyster on the back part of the island; and by him we were married. Though in these days few ecclesiastics resemble Jonston, yet among them are many good men, who, from genuine charity, hold frequent communication with each other; passing from society to society objects of charity and real

desert to each other's cloysters; thereby counteracting the malicious tendencies of the times, and frustrating very frequently the manœuvres of the mighty, and mighty wicked men of this age. Through this benevolent custom, we were passed on, northwards, from one cloyster to another, for many months, often (yet safely) hearing the bruit of our being pursued.

• My wishes for going into France had long bent to those of Ella; who expecting soon to become a mother, and trusting to the long-tried kindness of Earl Renne and Editha, had prevailed on me to return to Chiviot; where, (being of an athletic form) she flattered herself that, under the disguise of a loon, safety from enquiry might be best attained; and our utmost ambition gratified, by my being employed as

woodman or forester of Earl Renne. We received no cordiality of welcome from my wife's supposed mother; but no sooner were the Halfladen and Earl acquainted that Ella preferred honest marriage with a soldier to guilty prostitution with a King, than she met from them the kindest welcome and most liberal extension of every domestic comfort befitting our humble state. No suspicions of my superior birth appeared either in my superiors or equals. Forester of Chiviot Earl Renne soon appointed me, fixing us in a neat and commodious cottage in its purlieus. Those were happy days! The Earl was ever right courteous to me, appearing pleased with my conversation, and always full of enquiries if my wife and child required any further supplies; yet I marked, and, wondering,

marked the Earl carefully avoided seeing or holding converse with Ella; who, on her part, was ever lamenting his reserve, expressing such affection for him, that might have raised unpleasant sensations in suspicious minds. For this extraordinary mutual love in the Earl and Ella, how clearly does his late history of himself account !

‘ It was not more than three years after our return when the Earl left Chiviot, apparently in a dejected state. The Ethling Agitha had ever expressed a malign kind of joy, that the Beauty (as she tauntingly called my wife) had thrown herself away upon a vulgar trooper, forbidding her ever to appear in her presence; whilst the good Half-laden was continually sending for Ella and her babe, overpowering them with presents, and even with personal en-

dearments. Within a twelvemonth of my Ella's death, (the time I conjecture when Cicely disclosed Agitha's real birth) the Ethling became suddenly excessively fond of my dearest, sending her continually cates from her own table, and often inviting her there; on which days I doubt not her fell machinations began. Poor Ella soon became unwell: then would Agitha attend with medicines, and comfits, and cordials, which she constantly saw her take. Ah! that I had followed Cicely's dehortations to Ella respecting her not taking these compositions! but, alas! we thought it proceeded from jealousy on her part, hoping, by such refusals, a rising favourite might be suppressed; for Agitha was most tenacious of her judgment and skill in the medical art.

‘ On the direful effects and cruel ca-

tastrophe occasioned by this diabolical conduct in the Ethling, I cannot dwell. Assuredly, (notwithstanding Oswald's conciliatory arguments to the contrary) assuredly, my soul's delight died, and that in the most excruciating yet lingering way,—by poison !'

Earl Edmund, suffused with grief, instantly limped out of the room, leaving his friends deeply afflicted; while the Vavasor added to their griefs, by representing Ella's singular amiableness and uncommon beauty. Edmund again returned, to apologize for his puling mood, as he termed it.

'It was not always so, my friends,' said he; 'the house of Kent could once endure every thing save imputations inimical to their honour. But poor human nature, when assailed with keen inflictions, both mental and corporeal,

its pride thereby lowered, shews its fragility, as you see in my conduct: yet believe me, I repine not: the Most High thus mercifully tries me, to render me, through personal sufferings, more refined and meet company to rejoin my Ella in that highly advanced state into which her merit assuredly has consigned her.'

On the following day the King of Scotland announced his early intended departure, discovering his dignity to Earl Walthelolf, and inviting him to receive personal honours in the Scottish Court.

'Tell your Monarch,' said Kenneth to the Earl, 'that we greet him with the right hand of amity; that when this afflicted family are reinstated in the peace and happiness they so well deserve, I will pray the royal Ethel-

wolph to hold a carousal in his palace at Coventry; where ourselves will attend, and demand of his Highness the peerless Ellen, Ethling of Warwick and Kent, as a reward to our then richly endowed Dalzell. Dalzell, I command thee not to leave Earl Renne till thou hast attended the family removal to Warwick; (a measure my sincere friendship for this noble house strongly enforces to be taken as soon as their convalescent state will admit of travelling) then join our Court at Inverness, and witness Macrae's just punishment. Such a recreant is unworthy (as I am informed he is unwilling) to measure swords with thee.'

The King of Scotland left Chiviot the ensuing day, being escorted by Earl Renne, Warden of the Marches, nobly accompanied to the banks of

Tweed, where his own regal suite awaited his arrival.

The quitting Chiviot Fort was a heavy undertaking to its noble family, and the more, as the Earl declared it must be for ever; for, as he observed, the house of Beauchamp had, in the person of his late murderous father, so dishonoured the family, that they never could flourish on its blood-stained ground: he therefore publicly relinquished the honours and emoluments of Chiviot to the worthy Vavasor; who there founded the brave and respectable house of Visipont.

Within a few weeks the Earls of Beauchamp and Kent, with their united families, removed by slow journeys to Warwick Castle; where they were greeted with the universal joy of that and neighbouring counties. Dalzell,

perfectly recovered, was the sole director, and great enspiriter of the party. The Halfladen endured the journey with surprizing fortitude, and entered her predial domains with a kind of pious joy, chastised by the remembrance of her lost friends. The gentle Ellen's health and spirits daily improved; but her sweet countenance ever retained the soft and melancholy trait of a Magdalen. Earl Renne's religious mind quickly found relief in erecting the noble Priory of Warwick, where the pious Jonston became the first Prior, and daily officiated at those splendid requiems performed in the chapel, for the repose of the souls of Earl Sigfrith and Ella; whilst Earl Renne, on the anniversary days of their death, submitted to a public penance, deprecating further visitations

of his house for their murder; attended with munificent gifts to all the neighbouring sons and daughters of distress. The Halfladen amused herself in erecting a noble Saxon edifice (the remains of which still are visible in Warwick Castle) adjoining to the noble tower built by Cæsar.

Upon Dalzell's return to Inverness, Macrae was publicly tried and condemned at Kenneth's Ward-mote; yet would not his generous enemy rest satisfied without offering him personal combat, which was denied on the traitor's part with true pusillanimity. Macrae rejected his earnest offer of removing him for life into the Abbey of Brothwick. 'No, he hated churchmen!' The hero then observing to Kenneth, that such a man was not fit to rush into eternity, obtained the royal mandate

for his perpetual imprisonment. Macrae was therefore removed to the then state prison, called the Bass Rock; an horrid excavation in a stupendous rock in the midst of Loch Leven; where he spent several unrepentant years, chained to a craggy projection; and at length died of famine, arising from a sudden tempest and frost which prevented the possibility of boats passing to convey provision to the state prisoners.

King Ethelwolph acceding to the Scottish King's request, soon held a princely carousal at Coventry; abounding with the rich and clumsy magnificence of that time. There the King of England publicly embracing and requesting pardon of Earl Edmund, restored to him the title and emoluments of his house; and at the same time insisted on knighting the young Hugo.

The public demand of Kenneth of the beautiful Ellen, as a reward for Dalzell's services, was most graciously acceded to by all parties; both Kings attending their splendid nuptials within the priory chapel at Warwick.

When the joyful, yet sorrowful time appointed by Kenneth arrived for the removal of this happy pair into Scotland (where the one continued to be the glory and the other became the grace of that country) Earl Edmund, though too apparently in a declining state, declared he should accompany Dalzell and Ellen. When near Chiviot, he plainly told them *that* was his earthly journey's end: there he would waste away the scanty remnant of his mundane pilgrimage; and close by his Ella's verdant grave would be his final rest; and very soon was this prediction

fulfilled. In the arms of the Vavasor he breathed his last of many sighs, full of gratitude to Heaven for the happy prospects that opened upon his children, yet infinitely more elevated with the cheerful hope of an eternal re-union with his adored wife.

Long was it before those affectionate children would admit consolation for the loss of this excellent parent. Maternal care, and continually renewed attendance on Earl Renne and the Halfladen, at length mitigated the sorrow of Ellen; while the young Earl of Kent, desirous to emulate the glory and valour of Dalzell, by strict adherence to his theory and practice in arms, by military employments buried his vehement sorrow for his beloved father. Full of days and good works, the Earl and Countess long survived,

to spread happiness round Warwick: they lived to see the young Earl of Kent happily married, and to adopt his second son. From his elder son sprung the great Earl Goodwyn, who gave England a valorous though short-lived King, in his son Harold. From Hugo's second son, Renne, descended the illustrious house of Beauchamp, (whose honours were considerably encreased by his descendant, the immortal Guy, Earl of Warwick) which, though after many centuries failing in the male line, is continued to this day in several of our prime nobility, who proudly quarter the well known chequered arms of Beauchamp; even the *bear and ragged staff* of the king-making and king-destroying Nevil, Earl of Warwick, couched beneath the superior bearings of Beauchamp; and though the present

Earl of that sumptuous castle inherits
neither name, he inherits the virtues
of those his maternal ancestors, and
with his own quarters the arms of Ne-
vil and of Beauchamp.

BATTLE RIDGE

CONTINUED.

THE auditors were variously struck with the Dalzell memoir. Doctor Scot deduced from it moral documents; Lord Staffa gloried in the early bravery of a Scotchman; whilst Sir Ralph grealy commended his loyalty. The matrons felt deeply the Halfladen's distress; the young ladies were perfect Niobes respecting poor Ella; whilst Master Vesey became very-urgent with Sir Ralph for leave to change his name to Hugo.

Within a few days Mrs. Scot appeared with woe, all her own, at break-

fast. Doctor Scot was gone!—had stepped out unnoticed by any save the porter, at day dawn, leaving an affectionate message to all, with the assurance of return within a few days. He was gone to meet a friend. What room for conjecture!—what food for fear in Mrs. Scot and her daughters!—the times so questionable!—armies marching and countermarching!—general discontent and apprehended cruelties!—in short, every sensation save distrust in the Doctor's conduct prevailed.

‘He can't be gone,’ said Sir Ralph, ‘on any loyal errand; for assuredly in such a case I might have been trusted.’

‘And in all others, save the development of your deed, Sir Ralph,’ said Mrs. Scot, ‘he has called me his Portia, and his confidence (dear man as he is) has been unlimited.’

‘ Dear madam,’ said Lady Vesey, with a disordered countenance, ‘ pray dwell not on that subject.’

At length, and in due time, the Doctor returned : cheerfulness irradiated his placid countenance, and he manfully withstood all solicitations for the developement of his late absence ; for, by agreement (and perhaps from a little pique) the party had agreed to open upon him in the interrogatory style, like a pack of staunch southern hounds. To the pack the Doctor thus mildly replied :

‘ Time, time will unfold every thing. I am engaged with a person who would have adored the Grecian God of silence : he once sent for an only and beloved brother, in order to transmit by him a message, rather than a letter, to distant friends ; but over the conviviality

of the evening bottle, the younger brother told the elder some trifling secret that had been imparted to him: whereupon, when they met early next morning, by appointment, to settle the business, the elder brother presenting the younger brother with a valuable tobacco-box, said, ‘ Brother, it will, like its master, open easily: *this* is all I have to trouble you with.’

Thus say some of our modern anecdoters of the great General Monk, for it was that distinguished personage who now wholly engrossed Doctor Scot’s time, and, who consulting the Doctor on all political points, was often determined by his counsels.

In early youth, Doctor Scot was Chaplain in that regiment where Mr. Monk bravely served under Charles the First; and there their early friend-

ship and mutual confidence was formed: nor was it impeded even when Mr. Monk (offended at inferior officers being preferred above him) left the King's service, and was soon after inveigled into that of the Parliament.— He never, in that service, was happy, because his principles and his interest were discordant, though judgment (as he termed it) conquered, rightly, inclination, and thereby he attained the highest rank in the Parliament army, and long commanded a large body of troops in Scotland.

Upon being summoned from thence by the scanty remains of the Parliament, and at the universal desire of each discontented party, to give his advice and assistance in new-fabricating a tottering state, he marched towards London,

and, by his particular desire, Doctor Scot joined him on the road thither.

The night before the good man left Cross bow Castle, he in some degree opened the plan to Sir Ralph Vesey, under the seal of secrecy, requesting him to quiet, if possible, the Ladies' curiosity and apprehensions, and to hold the family prepared to follow him to Battleridge, on the earliest notice ; as Sir Ralph would be more readily removed from thence, if summoned to London.

It is well known with what joy the Scottish troops were received in town, and how wisely General Monk dissembled with the Parliament, even so far as to obey their orders in dismantling the city ; but, when once seated firmly in power, he excluded the multifarious

assemblage of this everlasting Parliament from entering their house. A new and free Parliament being called and assembled, (not one individual of which, or hardly any other individual, knowing the General's real designs) the King's restoration and recall were unanimously agreed to; and on the 29th of May following his Majesty was received in London, from Breda, with an universality of joy undescribable.

The Vesey family being all returned to Battleridge Castle, Sir Ralph Vesey from thence met, and was most graciously received by his Sovereign. My Lady Vesey and all her suite, with Lord Aumerl, (whose joy at the Restoration, at first, almost overset his recovering faculties) soon followed to town, and there passed the winter in Aumerl House.

Great as Doctor Scot's influence was with General Monk, he could never dissuade him from instituting the bad, though political, doctrine of courting enemies, and passing by approved friends into the Royal ear; yet the General always assured the Doctor that any persons he recommended should be exempted from the ministerial, though ungrateful, counsel he offered. The Doctor's humility refusing to be placed on the Bench of Bishops, would accept only his resumed chaplainship, and restored ample preferment. To which was added (by Royal mandate from the Exchequer) the considerable arrears he had been deprived of during the long Usurpation.

Sir Ralph Vesey generously declining all places of emolument, (titles were needless to the presumptive heir

of Aumerl) accepted only a seat in Council.

Lord Staffa was invested with every honorary distinction in Scotland.

Sir Thomas Hazzelrig (though nephew to Sir Arthur Hazzelrig) was graciously received at Court; and, upon his marriage with Dr. Scot's daughter, advanced highly in the army.

Mr. Talmash had a lucrative employment in the finance line.

Mr. Weston's utmost ambition was gratified in being placed in the new commission of the peace, and in becoming ranger of a neighbouring forest; whilst honest Lawyer Jephson was nominated Receiver-General of Cumberland, and had thereby the satisfaction of keeping Peggy a coach—ever his primary wish.

During the following winter, which Sir Ralph's family spent in town, they were received at Court with the utmost distinction. Lady Vesey's delicate and gentle mind sought pleasure only at home; whilst Lady Staffa (equally domestic) retired, as much as propriety allowed, from the universal and pointed admiration paid to her beauty; declining the continued masks and entertainments of the Court; for, alas! they early exhibited too much indecorum.

In the spring of that year, what a gloom was thrown over these worthy families' innocent pleasures, by Doctor Scot's long and imminently dangerous state! he having caught a jail fever by his attendance upon an hardened parishioner, then confined in Newgate. Twenty days elapsed without the least

hope of his recovery. He slept much, and noticed little: when sensible, could only recommend to his wife and family the great duty of resignation. The crisis passing safely on, the twenty-first day he began growing restless, and fearful, as he termed it, of wanting strength to fulfil a promise he had long since made. This restlessness increasing with his strength, the physicians consented, unwillingly, that he should see some select friends. Accordingly Sir Ralph Vesey, Sir Thomas Hazzelrig, Mr. Talmash, and Mrs. Scot, were desired to attend his bed side. Bolstered up, and looking like a spiritual being, this divine man thus bespoke his much-affected and solemn friends:

‘ My friends, the Almighty has thus graciously granted me little respite, to fulfil my promise and only un-

gratified wish, in rendering to you all a faithful detail of my original discovery of the Battleridge important deed, whereby my appearance of mystery will be accounted for.' He stopped—every nerve shook: an holy awe and solemnity was visible in his countenance. He asked for drops—revived, and thus proceeded:—' You remember, my dearest, (turning to Mrs. Scot) that, having been long engaged in a calculation-work for Mr. Milton, I told you, one morning, I would finish the work that day; and a hard day's work it was. With difficulty I persuaded you to retire to our children about nine at night. Refreshed by your's and their chatter, I thought I would again cast my eye over the papers, in case of having made any mistake. The heavy sounding church-

clock struck twelve. It roused me, and I felt a kind of chilly horror—I knew not why. Enough, said I, of these unyielding earthly matters!—I will think awhile on essentials and on future comforts, and then rest this inadequate frame. So saying, I resumed my great chair by the fire, opposite to wife's usual seat, raked out the fading embers, and sought their warmth to my cold feet, shutting my weary eyelids, to refresh my tired and almost exhausted eye-sight. If I can credit my sensations, gentlemen, I slept not, nor even dozed; for well do I recollect my meditations during the few minutes I remained in this quiet way.

‘On opening my eyes, how was I amazed to behold a venerable old gentleman (the figure resembling the pictures I have seen of Elizabeth's old

Burleigh) occupying my wife's opposite and vacant chair. It was a fixed, and seemingly unrespiring, figure; placidity and benignity appeared on its venerable countenance, whilst its fixed eyes were pointed at me. It is impossible, were it necessary, to describe my variety of sensation. I was not of a superstitious mind, yet never scoffed at the wonderful relations I had heard of apparitions, (such I plainly discerned this to be) suspending belief and questionality. It was rather my opinion that departed spirits (especially those of virtuous people, like good Josiah) were removed from the knowledge of this evil world; yet I thought it possible, in cases of murder and grievous iniquity, that the Just and Almighty Being might impress the human mind with a kind of visionary

terror, and, through the medium of conscience, terrify the guilty into a belief of preternatural appearances.— I thanked my God that I was not guilty of any notoriety of iniquity; therefore, trusting to the protection of an Omnipotent Power, and remembering how graciously human nature had been dignified, rising from my chair, in the name of the Holy Trinity, I solemnly invoked the Appearance to relate the cause of this supernatural exhibition to me. In mild mellifluous, yet hollow accents, it thus replied :

“ Fear not, upright man, (so it was pleased to term me) I am a happy spirit :—such wilt thou be; crown thy benevolencies by saving a worthy family devoted to ruin. Seek out in Cumberland Battleridge - Castle, the seat of my worthy successor, Sir Ralph Vesey.

Within a picture-gallery there, (in an old lumber-room) thou wilt find (under a false bottom of an old cramped chest, made of heart of oak) the title-deeds of Battleridge, and a large sum of money. Render both to Sir Ralph Vesey, and thereby crown thine abundant charities. A worthy, though weak woman, I first sought; she was unequal even to the prelude of my visit. Thou, firm in mind, though a stranger, I therefore sought. Say, wilt thou perform my behest?"

‘ With an eagerness that rendered me almost unintelligible, I said, “ I will, I will.”

“ Conceal (replied the Spectre) this fact, for thine own sake, to all and every one, during this reign of cruelty and suspicion. Better times draw nigh: then thou art at liberty to use thy dis-

cretion therein. Swear thou wilt perform forthwith my request: nay, swear not without laying thy hand on that holy Bible."

' A Bible lay on a table behind me. Turning to it, I swore audibly to be faithful to the Spectre's commands, when, upon turning my head, the Appearance was gone. My concern was audible. Fear had been overcome by the gentle address of the gentle Spirit; and I had such an earnestness of desire to hold further converse with it, that I dealt in every invocation leading to its return in vain. I again placed myself in my chair; and a placid tranquillity I had before never felt seemed to sooth my mind into perfect composure; and within the hour I went up stairs to bed.

' If you remember, Mrs. Scot, you

you asked me who I had been talking to? My answer was evasive, though satisfactory. I soon fell into the deepest and sweetest sleep. Upon first awaking, a time when the recruited faculties are most clear, (as doubtless, from analogy, they will be on the morning of the resurrection) the scenes of the foregoing night strongly flashed on my mind; yet, thought I, *this* must have been a dream—no, it was not—yes, it was a dream.

‘ Just at that moment, you Mrs. Scot entered the room, and with trifling looks related—that, by not putting up my papers, as usual, (at which you marvelled) a cat had thrown down the ink upon some of them, whilst her playful kitten had destroyed a whole written sheet.

‘ Conviction and confirmation this,

that dreams were out of the question, I replied, "Trifles!—mere trifles!" —I arose.

'Impatience more than doubt haunted me through the day. In the evening, Mr. Talmash, I sought you at the coffee-house. You know the rest. May Heaven reward you and Sir Thomas for your credulity!—may it bless and protect you all! I am almost finished. If I live I will tell more; if not, good Lady Vesey will; yet mention not this wonderful fact unnecessarily to her.'

Saying this, the Doctor reclined his head, waving his hand for the gentlemen to leave him, and seemingly slept. Aghast, they all retired, and tottered down stairs, where the worthy physician awaited their return. Beholding each palid countenance, he cried:

'And is it so? I was too sanguine.'

—What a loss the world sustains ! If the sight of death, in a man so well prepared for it, is thus so appalling, what must death among the unprepared be ?

‘ Dead !—not dead, dear Doctor ; go up, and try to restore him : he is, we trust, only fatigued,’ said Mr. Talmash ; and so it proved. The Doctor poured down a strong and composing cordial ; the patient slept sweetly for many hours, awaking to clearness and composure.

In the evening he again sent for his friends, and thus resumed : ‘ You recollect, Sir Ralph, that you found me in your gallery, almost fainting upon the sight of your grandfather, the Lord Aumerl’s picture, in whose representation I saw every lineament of my late supernatural visitant. When you

represented Lady Vesey in rather an insane state, (as continually talking of visions) I instantly thought she was *that* woman the appearance alluded to: hence I impatiently sought to see, and endeavour to quiet her mind: and thankfully do I say that, by telling a part of the story, it was effected; for under the seal of secrecy I related my vision. Her's was simply this:

‘One evening, having over-fatigued herself in researches after the deed in the lumber-room, at close of day she sat down to rest in the gallery. Directly the softest music first assailed her ears. Rapt in wonder, rather than fear, she beheld a gentle lambient light emit, as it were, from Lord Aumerl's picture, and gently move towards the lumber-room. Fear benumbed her

senses—she fainted, and remembered nought further.

‘It is my wish that her Ladyship may never be required to talk upon this subject; for though now at perfect peace, her once debilitated mind has never recovered its pristine tone; especially when this wonderful, and, I am certain, this veritable event is brought on the tapis.’

From this time, Doctor Scot gradually, and at length perfectly recovered; by which means returning happiness again beamed, and continued to beam (a few shadowy flitting clouds, as must be in this world sometimes passing by) for a number of years upon his family, and those he most loved. In winter, the Doctor’s best friends conjunctively met in town, and every summer assem-

bled together either at Battleridge or at Lord Staffa's, Cross-bow Castle.

Doctor Scot used frequently to say, that he feared (with Dives) he was receiving his good things here; for his second daughter, passing a summer with her sister, Lady Hazzelrig, in Yorkshire, married into one of the first families in that county. His eldest son became a most opulent merchant in the West Indies; whilst his second succeeded Mr. Talmash in his lucrative line. Harry, the youngest, being a few years only senior to Mr. Vesey, accompanied him through all the stages of successive education; and a friendship, equal to that of their parents, ended but in death.

Mr. Vesey was a fine, spirited, docile, amiable young man; and, in his vacations from the University, early

marked the growing beauty of Scotty Scot, the Doctor's youngest darling. When she was near fifteen, Mr. Vesey's destined time for travelling arrived.

The day was fixed, and postponed, on his part, several times. At length, the baggage was sent forward, and the next morning fixed for the departure. All were assembled in the breakfast parlour at Battleridge, and (like Parson Evans) had more inclination to cry than to laugh, though cheerfulness was to be the thing.

Mr. Vesey, coming down stairs, and meeting poor Scotty with swollen eyes, only said, 'My dear little Scotty, pray keep away, or you will make your Mamma cry.' She sobbed, and was obedient.

The assembly were even merry at

breakfast. Mr. Harry Scot was mounted, and gone on: Mr. Vesey, after taking a running leave, mounted also, and proceeded to the lodge, amidst the blessings and prayers of the congregated servants and villagers; when, turning short back, he was in the breakfast-room again, almost as soon as his father, mother, Doctor and Mrs. Scot. Falling on one knee to his father, he cried, ‘Forgive my weakness, best of parents and of friends: you have always said you never would dictate to me in marriage: I love Scotty too well, dearest Sir, and Madam, (speaking to Dr. and Mrs. Scott) keep this fair flower in the shade, unseen, unknown, (especially to the Great, in our free Court) till I return. Neither herself, or even Harry, know one word of my attachment. Oh! keep her, and

if she will then love me, grant your free consent for our marriage.' And it was directly unanimously and most joyfully granted by all parties.

Mr. Vesey therefore mounted his horse very lightly, and, following his friend, passed two years on the Continent, in a most beneficial mode ; while Scotty Scot received the high finish of education suitable to that high rank she was so happily destined to fill. The marriage took place soon after Mr. Vesey's return, sanctioned by four most excellent parents, and attended by Lord and Lady Staffa, and their fine young family.

The reader must not be saddled by elaborate descriptions of the closing scenes of mortality. At a late period, Sir Ralph and Lady Vesey, Dr. and Mrs. Scot (surrounded by a numerous

progeny) passed easily to that eternally happy state, which, through life, had been the grand object of their pursuit.

The innocent life of Lord Aumerl was closed under the protection of Mr. and Mrs. Vesey, and by their gentle and affectionate treatment of this poor Lord, his mental faculties daily improved, and he left life and his immense fortune with lively joy on the assurance of his successor's merits.

The Earldom of Aumerl resting in Mr. Vesey, he became a truly patriotic nobleman: he was supreme in and among that slender, virtuous party in the House of Lords, who, though faithfully attached to Monarchy, boldly opposed the arbitrary, venal, licentious doctrines of that time.

Alas! in his unremitting attendance on public affairs, Lord Aumerl con-

tracted that fatal distemper which deprived his friends, his family, his country, of a most valuable man, when little more than forty years had been allowed for his exercising every public, every private virtue here.

He left three young and rich heiresses to the care of the best of mothers and of friends. Such was Lady Aumerl, and her brother, Mr. Henry Scot; who, refusing all preferment, lived constantly with his sister at Battleridge. She was a widow indeed! All her time became devoted to her children, and in the education of them she was advised by those great and good women, Lady Rachael Russell (her relation) and the high soul'd Ann, Countess of Derby, Pembroke, and Montgomery, who spent much time at one of her castles near Battleridge.—

These great Ladies recommended a private education, and the real culture of the heart. Hence Lady Aumerl seldom carried her daughters to town: their native simplicity and engaging manners thereby remained uncontaminated, whilst a constant coterie of the best and most select company of that time rendered them perfectly easy and highly well-bred.

The *ton* manners, which close the eighteenth century, was unknown; the bold stare, the free address, even to men; the continual ramble from home, with the sullen reserve and chilling *ennui* practised at home, in these our days, were unknown: the continual grin of assumed happiness, rather than the beaming smile of real cheerfulness, had not then raised up its affected head. Vapid sentiment and the

flummery of fine feelings had not taken place of solid sense, of real benevolence and true charity ; while the real love of husbands and children were esteemed the first of feminine virtues.

Educated on this most sensible plan, the young Lady Veseys were sought still more for their virtues than great possessions. Each married, early in life, into three noble Northern families ; and though the title of Aumerl is no more, the virtues of Vesey still exist in many of their illustrious descendants.

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FINIS.

